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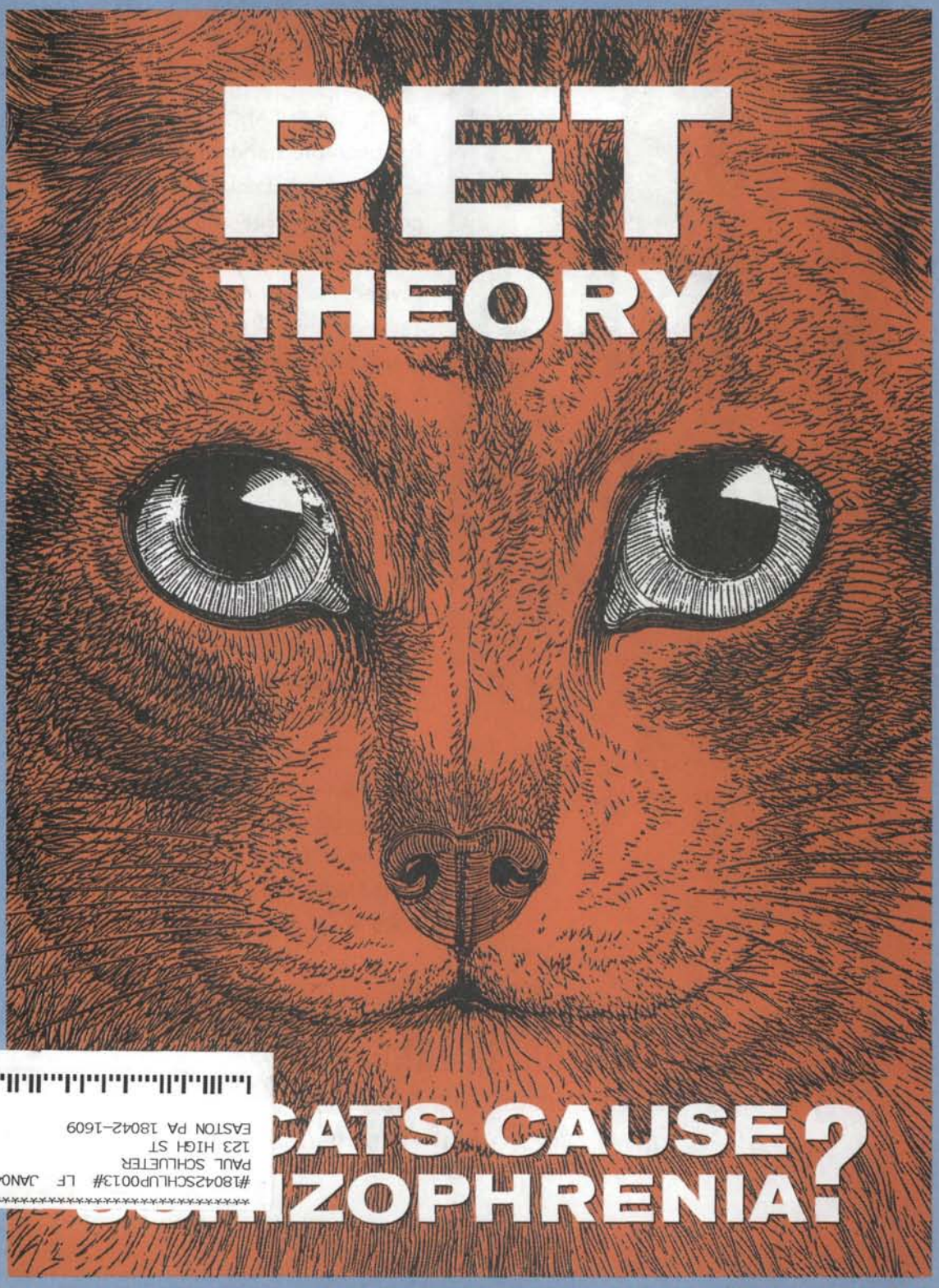

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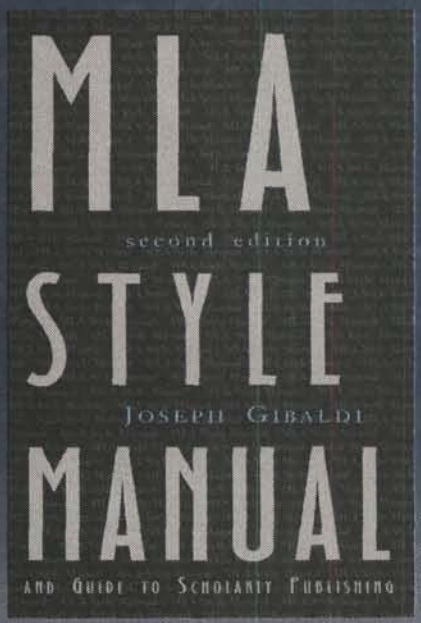

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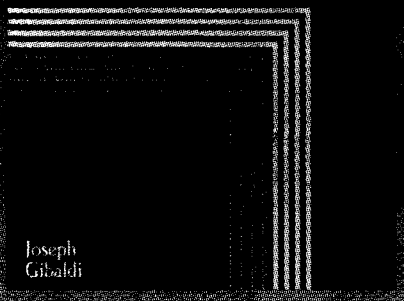

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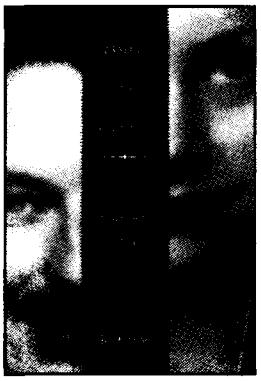

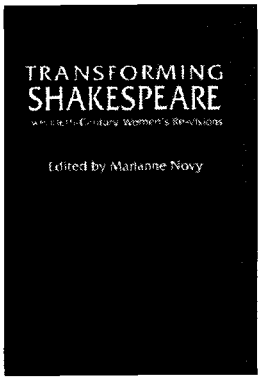

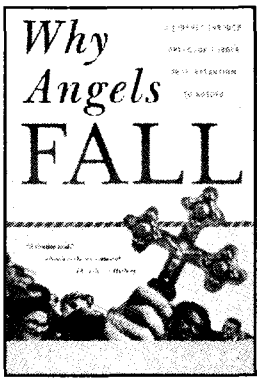

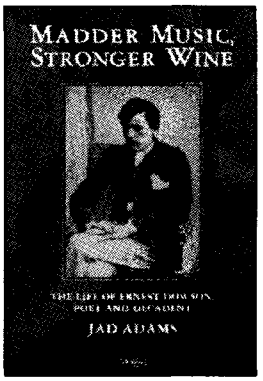

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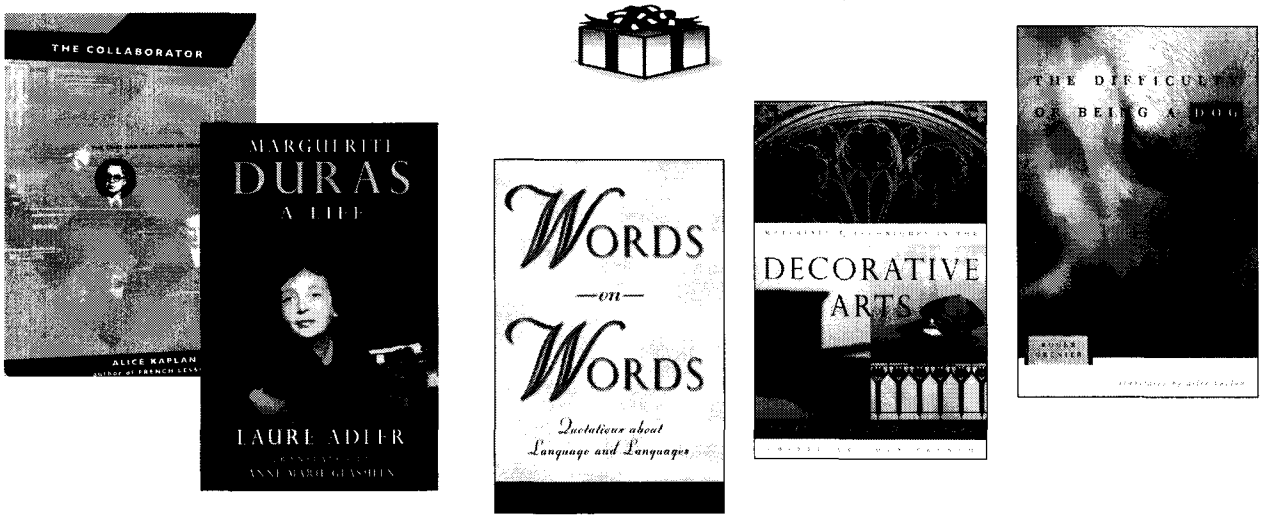

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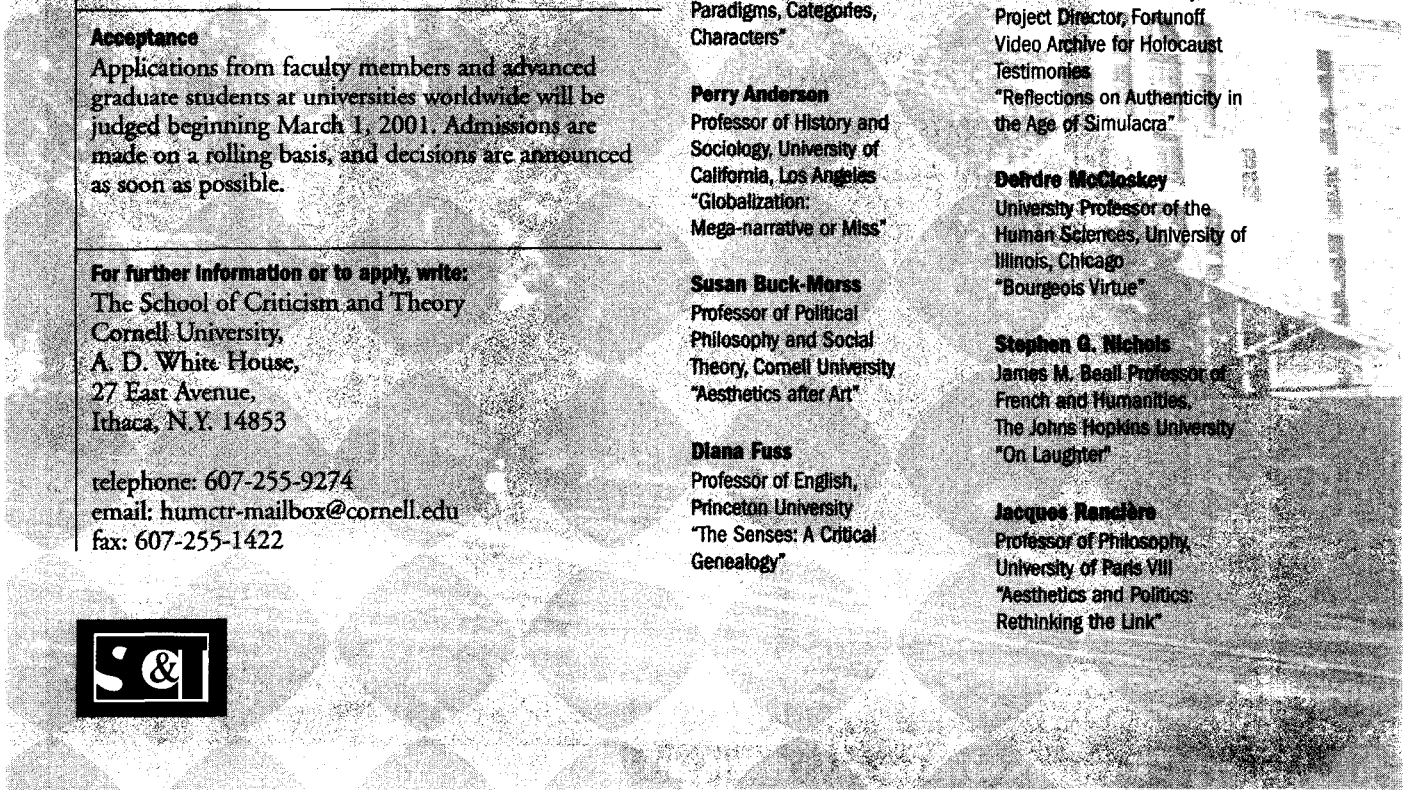

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Table of Contents

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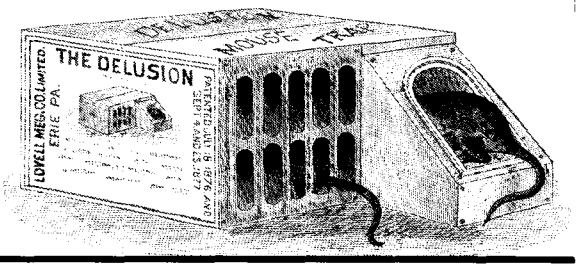

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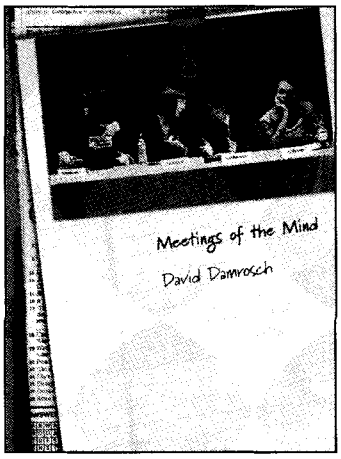

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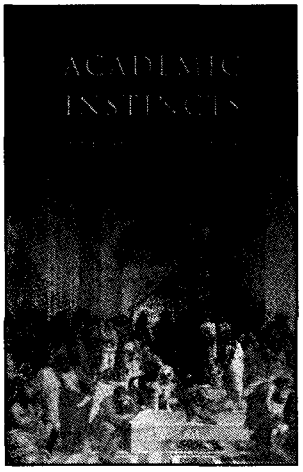

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SCOWL OF MINERVA

Professor Philip G. Altbach, recommending works on the university [Breakthrough Books, October], has praise for the late Edward Shils's *The Calling of Education*, especially Professor Shils's criticism of "the politicization of higher education." I share Altbach's high regard for our colleague's intellect and learning, but I am puzzled by the reference to Shils's opposition to politicization. Shils himself participated in at least three notable political ventures in higher education and in our intellectual life generally:

- He collaborated with Shepard Stone in the disbursement of Ford Foundation funds to European academics, who were told, in no uncertain terms, that they were expected to refrain from criticizing the United States.
- He was a senior figure in the Congress for Cultural Freedom, which worked closely with the Central Intelligence Agency to reward ideological friends and punish enemies during the Cold War.
- Finally, after the exposure of the Congress for Cultural Freedom as something other than a high-minded group dedicated to liberalism, pluralism, and transparency, he shifted his activities to the publication of the journal *Minerva*, in which he and others excoriated those who suggested that our society was not quite perfect.

It is difficult to view these engagements as instances of politically disinterested scholarship. Indeed, in accounts that trace the genealogy of neoconservatism, Shils is often quite unjustly overlooked.

NORMAN BIRNBAUM
University Professor
Georgetown University
Law Center

PARIS IS WORTH A PLAY

I was surprised that the commentators quoted in Maurie Samuels's "J'Accuse Sartre" [Field Notes, October] failed to note the deeper philosophical grounds for Sartre's wartime activities. Had Sartre's voice of protest against the Nazi occupation been louder, he would have risked being silenced completely, in which case the important political message in his play *Les Mouches* would never have been heard. The paradox of freedom that Sartre upheld his entire life requires us to act in the midst of constraint. It is to Sartre's credit that, in staging his politically charged play during the occupation, he used the very limitations imposed on him to reveal to the French people their own moral backsliding.

GAIL E. LINSENBARD
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
Springfield College
Shorewood, WI

SECRETS OF THE DICTIONARY

In his piece about hoaxes in reference works ["Great Scot?," October], Christopher Shea mentions that the 1980 edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* contains two such spoofs. He should take a look at *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, edited by Nicolas Slonimsky. One entry excerpt reads: "Possessed by inordinate ambition, aggravated by the endemic intellectuality of his family of both maternal and paternal branches (novelists, revolutionary poets, literary critics, university professors, translators, chessmasters, economists, mathematicians, inventors of useless artificial languages, Hebrew scholars, speculative philosophers), he became determined to excel beyond common decency in all these doctrines; as an adolescent, wrote out his future biography accordingly, setting down his death date as 1967, but survived." The subject of this entry? Nicolas Slonimsky. But there are plenty of other loaded entries in this reference work.

DAVID GALEF
Associate Professor of English
University of Mississippi

APOLOGY

As this issue was going to press, we learned that several passages in "On the Genealogy of Morels" by Jason Sholl [November] were reproduced nearly verbatim from "A Place at the Table," an article by Jennifer Ruark that appeared in the July 9, 1999, issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Sholl regrets having reproduced these passages without attribution and acknowledges his debt. *Lingua Franca* apologizes to the *Chronicle* and its writer.

CORRECTION

Due to an editing error, our November Breakthrough Books column erroneously referred to ancient Rome's Suburban Baths as a "unisex locker room." In fact, the baths contained one such room among others.

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STEALING TIME

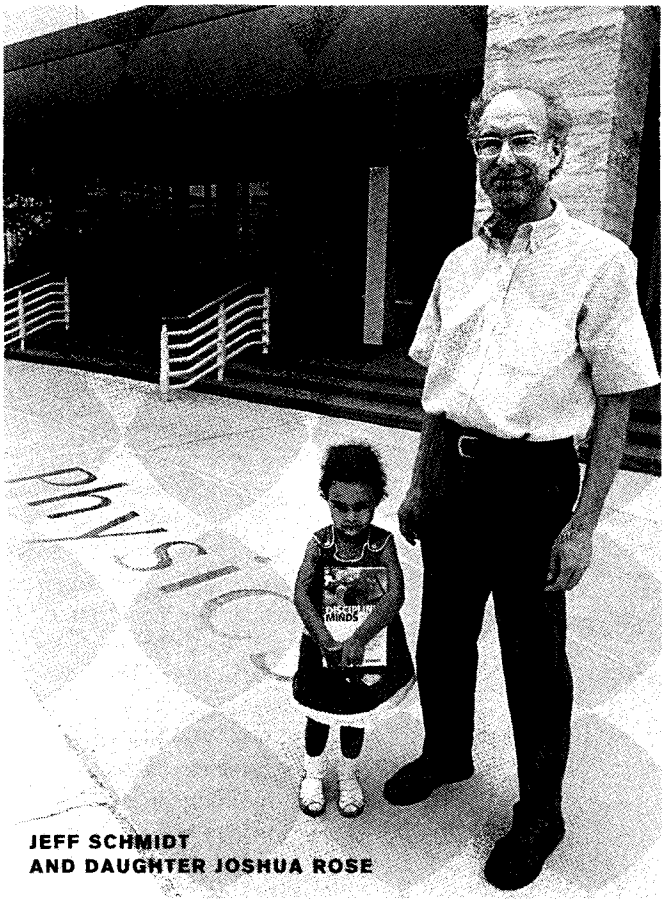
HOW SERIOUSLY SHOULD one take the chest-thumping rhetorical flourishes of a manifesto? Abbie Hoffman may have urged his readers to "steal this book," but surely he might have conceded that yeah, okay, he was counting on royalties. Similarly, when Jeff Schmidt pays homage to Hoffman by kicking off his recent book with the sentences "This book is stolen. Written in part on stolen time, that is," he doesn't mean it literally.

Or does he? His bosses thought so. The question now lies at the heart of a dispute between Schmidt and his former employers at *Physics Today*, a 121,000-circulation magazine published by the American Institute of Physics in College Park, Maryland.

In *Disciplined Minds: A Critical Look at Salaried Professionals and the Soul-Battering System That Shapes Their Lives* (Rowman & Littlefield), Schmidt assails the conformity that professional life demands and offers some self-help-ish tips to those sweating in their white collars. After the attention-grabbing opening line, he goes on to explain what he means by "stolen time": "Like millions of others who work for a living...my job simply didn't leave me enough energy for a major project of my own.... So, I began spending some office time on my own work, dumped my TV to reappropriate some of my spare time at home, and wrote this book." Soon after his bosses read that, Schmidt says, they marched him to the human-resources office, had someone retrieve his personal effects, and told him that they never wanted to see him again. It was clear, they said, that he wasn't "fully engaged" in his work.

Since that unhappy day, physicists and journalists have rallied around Schmidt to try to help him get his job back. He insists he's been canned for workplace activism and the "attitude crime" of writing a subversive book. Although he adopts a rebellious stance in his book—and describes himself as a political radical—he is a good worker, he insists. He has also taken a few baby steps away from the bold

Schmidt believes he was fired for writing a subversive book while at work.



JEFF SCHMIDT AND DAUGHTER JOSHUA ROSE

CHARLES STECK

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claims in his introduction. "They have a one-hour unpaid lunch period and a total of a half hour of break time," Schmidt explains. "When I was working on the book during unpaid break time, it *felt* as though I was working on stolen time." The publisher of *Physics Today*, Randolph Nanna, and the human-resources director of the American Institute of Physics declined to comment on the case. But if the "stolen time" claim was the sole reason for letting Schmidt go, the incident raises an interesting question: Can you fire an employee for what he claims to have done, without checking to see if he's bluffing?

Disciplined Minds has more to do with academia than you'd guess from its subtitle. Inveighing against the injustices visited upon salaried professionals, Schmidt takes his own profession, physics, as his main case study. He recalls that, in 1980, the head of his graduate adviser's research group at the University of California at Irvine wanted Schmidt's dissertation typed up on a rush order, just to get rid of him—Schmidt had apparently stirred up too much trouble with his criticisms of nuclear-weapons programs and his advocacy on behalf of another student who had flunked out. The high rate of attrition in physics especially caught his attention. "What I noticed was that the dropout rate was not politically neutral," he says. "To put it bluntly, the program favored ass kissers." As does all professional training, he might add. And exposure to such pressures leads to political conformity: He claims that in 1972, the most educated Americans were the most likely to oppose withdrawal from Vietnam.

Yet do not despair, says this veteran of the 1960s (Schmidt is fifty-four), whose book is adorned with glowing blurbs from Howard Zinn, Stanley Aronowitz, and Michael Bérubé: One can carve out space for freethinking. He urges readers to lose their hunger for compliments from superiors and to "pursue your own goals while supposedly pursuing your employer's goal." Other proposals are more out there: He reprints an army manual for surviving as a prisoner of war, with the suggestion that readers mentally "substitute 'graduate or professional school' for 'PW camp.'"

Schmidt apparently put some of these suggestions into practice. At *Physics Today*, he argued vociferously for such reforms as the elimination of salary inequities among editors and the hiring of members of minority groups. In 1997, after he refused to pipe down at a company retreat, he was warned, in writing, that his "destructive and counterproductive" behavior would no longer be tolerated. In the last couple of years, his performance evaluations were downgraded from superior to satisfactory, he says, yet he insists he stayed ahead of schedule on his work. "He was their best articles editor before they fired him," says Jean Kumagai, who left *Physics Today* last year for *IEEE Spectrum*, an engineering magazine in New York.

So far, the American Institute of Physics has not been moved by Schmidt's pleas, nor by supportive letters from his friends and colleagues. Maryland's Department of Labor, however, sided with him in one important matter, granting him unemployment benefits. The agency concluded that the AIP had presented insufficient information to show that his actions constituted misconduct. According to Michael Gottesman, a specialist in labor law at the Georgetown University Law Center, however, that victory won't give Schmidt much leverage in court should he

THE YOUNG GEORGE W. BUSH'S DAYS AS A MEDIOCRE STUDENT at Andover have been well documented. What is less well known, however, is that the most famous member of the Class of 1964 was also a peripheral member of an Andover garage-band collective called the Torqués. A group of more than two dozen musicians, stage performers, and rock 'n' roll hopefuls, the Torqués were popular for a time on the New England tea-dance and prom circuit. The collective included a number of bit performers, some called Clappers and others known as Screamers. The latter were planted in the audience to make noise and rush the stage. One of the Screamers? George W.

During its three-year existence, the band kicked out a startlingly good thirteen-song LP featuring a version of the Trashmen's "Surfin' Bird" so wild and primitive that Andover's Bach lovers once picketed a gig. "Other Andover bands like the Invictas, the Satans, and the Apostles were better," says Randy Hobler, the Torqués' lead guitarist, who today is an Internet marketing consultant in the New York area; to stand out, the band billed itself as "the largest rock 'n' roll group in the world."

The cheers and hand claps of the future Texas governor didn't make it to vinyl, unfortunately—the Screamers weren't formalized until after the album was recorded. But Bush may get another chance to rush the stage. "There's a quorum of Torqués available to play an inaugural ball," Hobler says, adding that if Bush is sworn in as president, the band will be happy to administer the Clapper Oath to him.

—T. Corey Brennan

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decide to sue for wrongful dismissal. States are required to prove a former employee guilty of egregious misconduct before they can deny unemployment benefits. But as an at-will employee, lacking a contract, Schmidt can be fired for any reason not barred by an employment discrimination statute—even, theoretically, for writing a dull book, not just a controversial one.

But if Schmidt did snatch a few minutes here and there to work on his book, he notes that there are compelling precedents in physics for such petty larceny. Where would physics be if Albert Einstein hadn't stolen a few moments from the Swiss Patent Office, where he was employed when he worked out the implications of relativity?

CHRISTOPHER SHEA

LOGO CENTRISM

IN HER BOOK *NO LOGO*, NAOMI Klein writes that debates about corporate brands have become "the brand of politics capturing the imagination of the next generation of troublemakers." Klein's troublemakers might wish to visit London, where the exhibit Brand.New is currently on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Featuring Coca-Cola bottles from 1899 to 1994 and a pair of nineteenth-century Levi's alongside contemporary Benetton marketing, the exhibit showcases consumer products and advertising campaigns in all their attention-grabbing color. Co-curator Jane Pavitt explains, "We wanted to transform banal images into a comment on their banality."

For those who miss the show, Princeton University Press has published an eponymous book that expands on the exhibit's themes. In one essay, Aaron Betsky demonstrates how the proliferation of branded merchandise has led to the development of increasingly impersonal retail spaces such as the supermarket and the department store. Shorter articles provide snapshot studies of branding in a variety of contexts—from the British government's attempts to "rebrand" the country's stuffy national identity, to how store location in Beijing's Sun Dong An Plaza re-creates the global "hierarchy of fashion labels." Glossy images of billboards, malls, shopwindows, and advertisements adorn many of the book's oversize pages.

Brand.New's balanced history yields two fundamental insights: First, that despite increasingly sophisticated methods of delivery, the basic messages of advertising and the core appeal of branded merchandise have changed little over the past century; and second, that over the same period, the prevalence of advertising and branded merchandise has exploded, penetrating into increasingly intimate corners of life. Commenting on late-nineteenth-century patent-medicine advertisements, Pavitt asserts, "The messages seem so primitive, so basic—'Your life will be healthier, happier, better'—but we basically extract the same messages from the Nike swoosh or from Jennifer Aniston today."

Yet perhaps there have been some changes. In her essay "In

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–Lingua Franca

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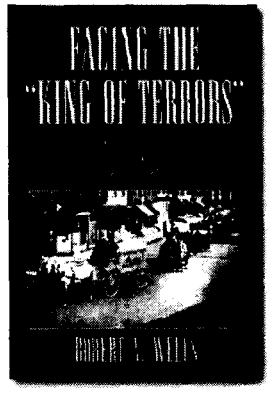

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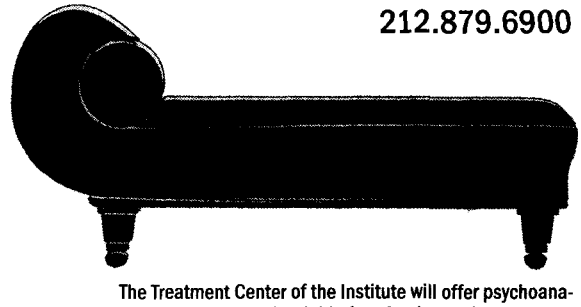

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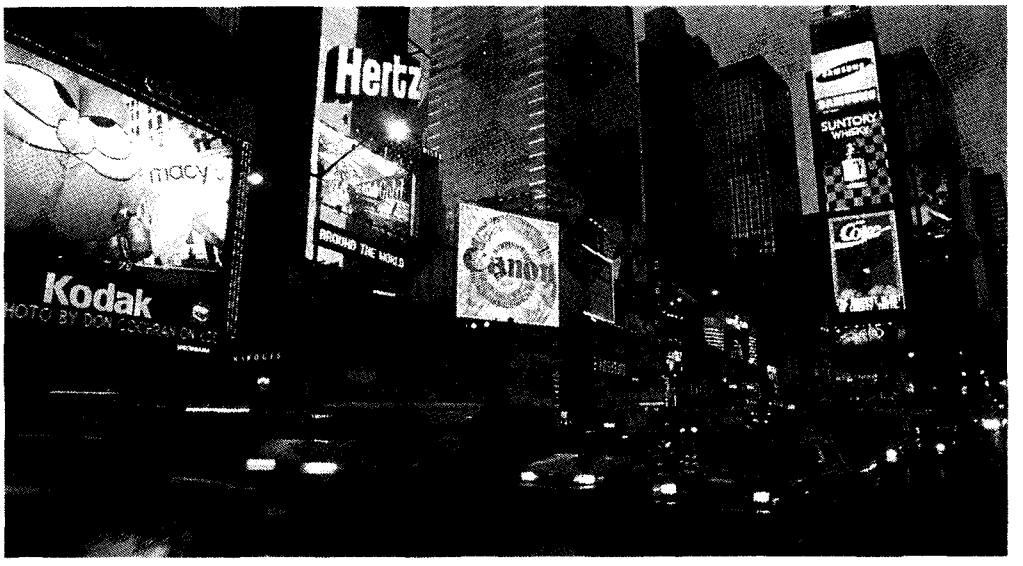

Goods We Trust?" Pavitt notes how the proliferation of malls and retail outlets has merged brands with the built environment, while brand-specific leisure activities, such as a vacation to Disneyland or an afternoon jaunt to NikeTown, have increasingly branded our time as well as our goods.

Has the global brand phenomenon succeeded in totally crowding out other kinds of experience? Tyler Cowen, a professor of economics at George Mason University, is not so sure. He criticizes *Brand.New* for presenting a portrait of the brand "in its monolithic form." "Brands may seem to make our culture more homogeneous," he says, "but they actually make it more diverse." In a forthcoming book, he will argue that small-scale manufacturers can not only survive in heavily branded societies, but also flourish. "If national brands foreclose choices," asks Cowen, "then why have we witnessed the proliferation of fast-food chains like McDonald's and the simultaneous proliferation of small ethnic eateries over the last twenty years?"

Other critics, however, feel that *Brand.New*'s sleek visuals actually underrepresent the power and prevalence of brands in contemporary culture. "Just as corporations pollute our physical environment," says Kalle Lasn, editor of the hip, anti-consumerist magazine *Adbusters*, "advertisers pollute an average American's mental environment with around three thousand marketing messages a day." Although Lasn himself contributed images to *Brand.New* and concedes that the book is visually handsome, he doesn't think it comes to grips with the real physical and psychological evils perpetrated by the images it celebrates. In the June/July 2000 issue of *Adbusters*, Lasn points to studies by the World Health Organization, psychologist Myrna Weissman, and others that suggest to him that "depression is increasing most quickly among the young and well off." Lasn attributes part of that increase to younger individuals' exposure to an incessant media barrage.

> "Brands may actually make our culture more diverse," says Tyler Cowen.

Lasn has devoted the last decade to a "mental-environmental" campaign to clean up the airwaves. But rather than trafficking in the gritty business of political activism, *Adbusters* attempts to turn the spin and hype of advertising against marketers through elaborate visual parodies in its own pages (one depicts the Joe Camel cartoon character in a hospital bed under the logo JOE CHEMO). As Pavitt notes in her defense, *Adbusters*, with its instantly recognizable spoofs, has itself become a heavily branded product.

Of course, much the same could be said of the Victoria and Albert Museum, an institution well known for serious exhibits on the decorative arts. Brand.New, in a departure from that tradition, suggests that even the museum's pristine display cases may provide no refuge from contemporary commercialism. After all, Pavitt points out, "Issues surrounding style and lifestyle—what branding is all about—are first and foremost visual issues."

JASON SHOLL

THE ANXIETY OF SELF-INFLUENCE

IN HIS RECENT BOOK *HOW TO READ AND WHY* (SCRIBNER, 2000), Harold Bloom extols the close and attentive reading of literature. Bloom may regret, however, that his own book has been read so closely by the staff of *Areté*, a new British literary journal edited by the poet Craig Raine. In its fall 2000 issue, *Areté* cites numerous examples of Bloom's "admirable consistency in repeating his favourite literary insights."

Among Bloom's self-plagiarisms: On page 94, he writes that Emily Dickinson "educates us to think more subtly, and with more awareness of how hard it is to break with conventions of response that have been deeply instilled into us"; on page 142, he rhapsodizes about Emily Dickinson, "whose intellectual originality allows her close readers to break with the conventions of response that have been deeply instilled in us." On page 157, Bloom tells us that Henry James "makes Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady* the 'heiress of all the ages'"; eighteen pages later, he writes of "Isabel Archer, famously termed by Henry James 'the heiress of all the ages.'" Most impressively, Bloom offers no fewer than six different variations on his insight that "Hedda Gabler is a remarkable blend of Shakespeare's Cleopatra with his Iago."

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FRENCH RESISTANCE

"LE MONDE N'EST PAS UNE marchandise"—the world is not for sale. So say a growing number of French intellectuals who worry that today's global economy values financial capital over basic human needs. One solution, as they see it, is to place a tiny tax on speculative transactions: the Tobin tax. This modest levy—ranging from .05 to 1 percent—could reduce currency speculation, provide increased fiscal autonomy for nations, and help fund the fight against poverty and disease.

But until every country agrees to adopt such a tax, opponents argue, what good can a French initiative do? One critic, the Canadian economist and Nobel Prize winner Robert Mundell, goes further, pronouncing the tax an "idiotic idea" that would protect underperforming economies from competition.

Though such disputes may seem like the preserve of policy experts and economists, the French see it differently. There, trade unionists, farmers, newspapers, and even city governments have entered the *Taxe Tobin* controversy, which has now spread to parliaments across Europe.

The idea of taxing speculative trading originated with the American economist and Nobel Prize winner James Tobin. Back in the 1970s, Tobin proposed that an "internationally uniform tax" could "deter short-term financial round-trip excursions into another currency." The suggestion, Tobin noted in a 1978 presidential address to the Eastern Economic Association, had fallen "like a stone in a deep well." But today, the volume of currency trading has swelled enormously, and Tobin's idea has new relevance. Explains David Felix, professor emeritus in economics at Washington University and an advocate of the tax, "$1.5 trillion changes hands on the world's money markets every day, and much of it is speculative. That's seventy times the value of trade in commodities and nonfinancial services. In the 1970s, that ratio was around 3.5 to 1."

Three years ago, the Tobin tax resurfaced in France's prestigious left-leaning monthly *Le Monde Diplomatique*. In the aftermath of the financial crises that swept across Asia in 1997, the journal's editor in chief, Ignacio Ramonet, warned that unchecked global investment was causing financial insecurity. "The storm that has hit the money markets in Asia and affected the rest of the world is part of a wider danger," wrote Ramonet. "That is financial globalization, which has become a law unto itself with its own powers." He warned of a world in which the "absolute freedom of movement for capital undermines democracy." As a partial solution to this problem, Ramonet advocated a version of the Tobin tax, suggesting that French trade

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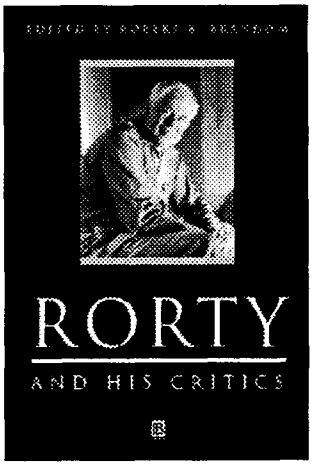

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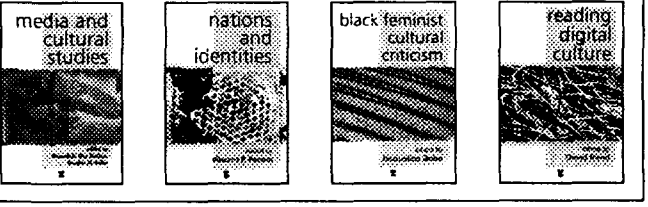

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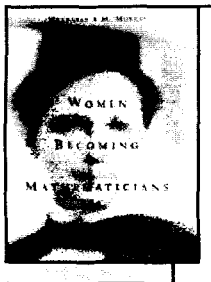
unions join forces with social, cultural, and ecological organizations to demand its implementation. He even suggested a name for the alliance: ATTAC, which now stands for the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens.

Pierre Tartakowsky, the general secretary of ATTAC, finds it remarkable that "people from the news" would "create an association," much less a movement. But three years later, a movement is exactly what ATTAC has become. With twenty-eight thousand members, a significant minority of whom are university teachers, the group has spawned chapters from Argentina to Tunisia. Through petitions, demonstrations, and popular-education efforts, ATTAC has called national and even international attention to the Tobin tax. The European Parliament narrowly voted down a measure to conduct a feasibility study on the tax last year, and it is currently debating a similar measure.

At a time of widespread anxiety about globalization, ATTAC also speaks to the concerns and curiosities of many French citizens. "Our goal is to connect ideas and social reality," says Laurent Jesover, an ATTAC activist and professor of literature. To that end, the group held its first "Summer University" in August, attracting seven hundred students to the former shipbuilding mecca and union stronghold La Ciotat. In the shadows of a dilapidated former woodworking factory, attendees listened to three-hour lectures on such topics as "Mega-mergers and the Concentration of Wealth" and "Eliminating Third World Debt." And some of ATTAC's 180 local chapters are planning to hold day classes on economics for the elderly as well as alternative-economics classes for high school students.

Even university economics departments have come under scrutiny. Last June, economics students at the elite Ecole Normale Supérieure circulated a petition criticizing what they



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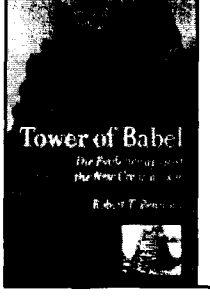

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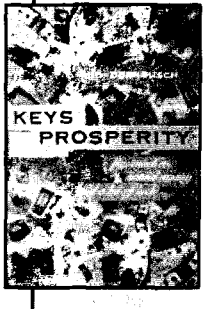

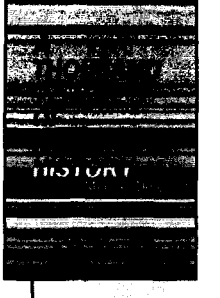

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called excessive "mathematical formalization" in their discipline. They had chosen economics as a field, the students said, hoping better to understand pressing social problems like unemployment and economic inequality. Their petition, reported *Le Monde,* described "a veritable schizophrenia" in economics, in which mathematical modeling "is an end in itself" and little if any attention is paid to concrete realities. Lavished with media attention, the students, some of whom were members of ATTAC, had collected nearly six hundred signatures by the end of July.

The students' critique provoked serious dialogue among professors. Sympathetic economists—including Michel Aglietta, Robert Boyer, and Jacques Valier—circulated their own petition, titled "A Debate on the Teaching in Economics. At Last...!" The signatories called for a public debate on the future of the discipline, voicing concern "that students feel, from the teaching that they get and the exercises they practice, that the activity of an economist would consist in 'running' models with no link with the actual realities." Rival economic luminaries like Edmond Malinvaud defend the "mathematical rigor" at the heart of modern neoclassic economic theory.

For French students and activists, this is a war of ideas with far-reaching consequences. After all, the larger ATTAC movement has called not just for more effective pedagogy but for "an economy in the service of mankind." It's a demand that resonates deeply with the French public—and one that just might find its way across the Atlantic.

JENNIFER BERKSHIRE

A COMEDY OF ERRORS

IT WAS NO ORDINARY BAD REVIEW. IN THE SPRING 2000 ISSUE of *The Shakespeare Newsletter,* co-editor Thomas A. Pendleton demanded the removal from circulation of Douglas Brode's book *Shakespeare in the Movies: From the Silent Era to "Shakespeare in Love"* (Oxford, 2000). Pendleton offers more than three pages of small type mercilessly cataloging the factual inaccuracies, tortured syntax, flaws of logic, misspellings, and misquotations he claimed to have found in Brode's book. By Pendleton's count, Brode misquotes Shakespeare thirty-five times (*Romeo and Juliet*'s "two hours' traffic of our stage," for example, is given as "two hours running time," and Gloucester's "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods" in *King Lear* becomes "We are to the gods as flies to children"). Among many other things, Pendleton also takes Brode to task for misspelling numerous names (including, at one point, Shakespeare's) and for appearing not to understand the meaning of such basic terms as "MacGuffin" and "soliloquy."

"Every book receives its share of good and bad reviews," a spokesperson for Oxford USA told *LF*. "It's part of the publishing process." But it may all bring to mind a line from *Coriolanus*: "And mountainous error be too highly heaped / For truth to o'erpeer."

EXPOSING AMERICAN PARADOXES

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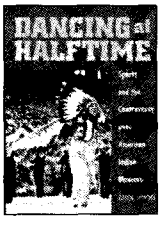
Sports and the Controversy over American Indian Mascots
CAROL SPINDEL



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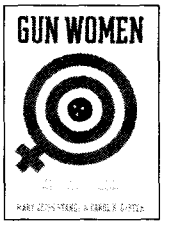

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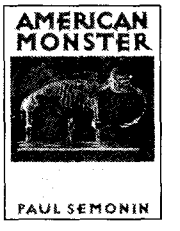

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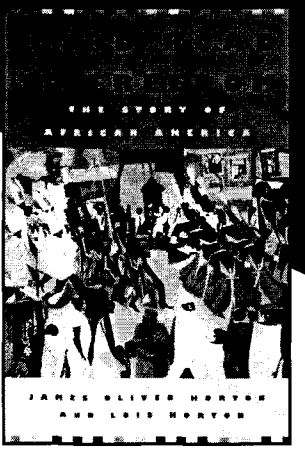

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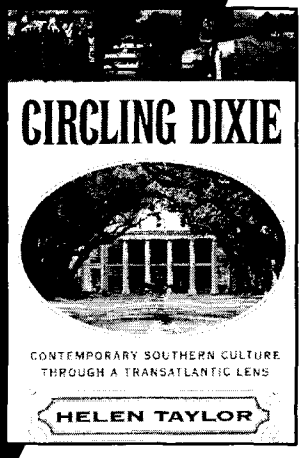

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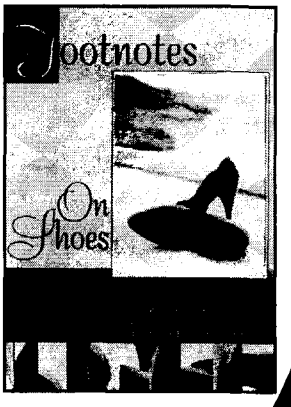

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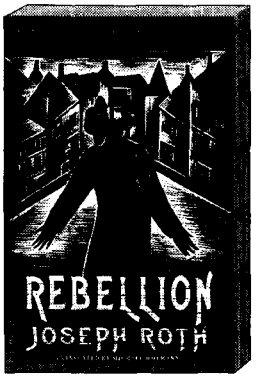
Joseph Roth



Although he wrote *The Radetzky March* and several other widely acclaimed novels, Roth (1894-1939) is "perhaps the least known of the important Jewish writers of this century" (*Library Journal*). Now, in *Rebellion*, celebrated poet and translator Michael Hofmann offers the last of Roth's novels to be rendered in English. Moving at a breakneck clip, this narrative captures the cynicism and upheavals of postwar Europe. Its jazzy cadences mix with trenchant, albeit fantastic, social commentary to create a wise parable about justice and society.

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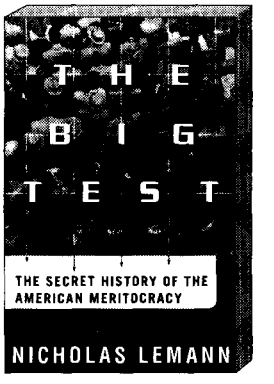

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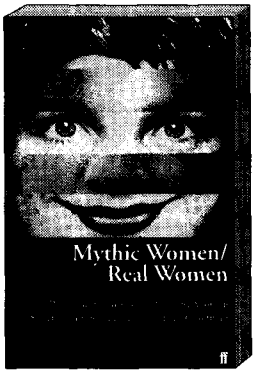

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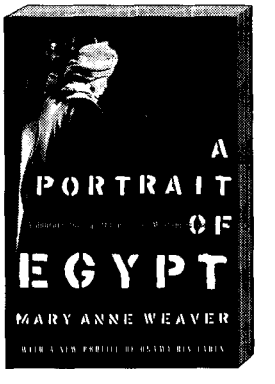

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Breakthrough Books

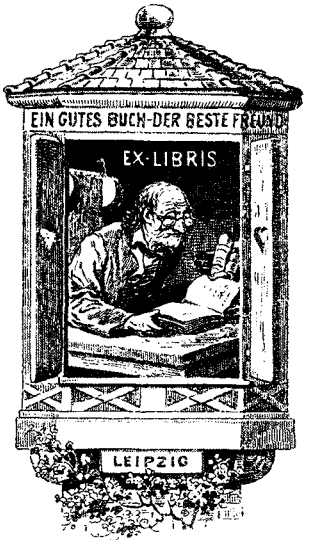
WE ASKED FIVE SCHOLARS TO RECOMMEND THE BEST BOOKS ABOUT READING.

Geoffrey Nunberg, principal scientist at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center and editor of *The Future of the Book* (California, 1996).

"It's easy to consider 'the history of reading' more or less synonymous with 'the history of reading books.' As soon as we step outdoors, though, we realize that a great proportion of the writing that we deal with in our daily lives is inscribed on walls or other public surfaces—that is, it is epigraphic rather than bibliographic. This oversight is unfortunate, because the epigraphic tradition may offer a better model for the forms of writing that are emerging in the new media.

"The Italian historian **Armando Petrucci** has done more than anyone else to revive interest in public writing. His groundbreaking ***Public Lettering: Script, Power, and Culture*** (Chicago, 1993) surveys the forms and uses of epigraphic writing from classical antiquity to the twentieth century. In ***Writing the Dead: Death and Writing Strategies in the Western Tradition*** (Stanford, 1998), Petrucci explores commemorative writing from the earliest funerary inscriptions to the Vietnam Memorial, brilliantly demonstrating how the history of writing recapitulates the intricate relations of technology and power. David Henkin's ***City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York*** (Columbia, 1998) is an engaging and insightful examination of the multifarious forms of public writing early New Yorkers encountered in their urban peregrinations. The book covers everything from signs, posters, and handbills to newspapers and paper money."

Anthony Grafton, professor of history at Princeton University and author of *Commerce With the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Michigan, 1997).



"In ***Kulturtransfer in der frühen Neuzeit*** (Cultural transfer in early modernity, Mohr Siebeck, 1999), **Sabine Vogel** studies how Italian humanism was adapted to French tastes in the sixteenth century. This tale is usually told in heroic terms: Individual scholars disregard their immediate economic and career interests in order to carry out a bold campaign for a new culture. Vogel takes a very different approach. She uses several hundred books printed in Lyon as the basis for a study in 'cultural transfer,' which turns out to mean cultural transformation. As Lyon's publishers, aided by scholars and press correctors, formatted the classics for modern readers, Vogel shows, they did more than transfer to northern soil the demanding, encyclopedic erudition of Italian humanists; they also adapted the research to meet the needs of schoolboys and merchants. Printers, scholars, and correctors, working together, created a new culture for an audience of *bons esprits*, who moved easily between Latin and French, preferred collections of passages to complete texts, and used classical citations with freedom and artistry, often to new effect. Vogel also demonstrates that the foundations for the essayistic culture developed by Montaigne were laid by cultural impresarios out to make a profit."

Paul Saenger, curator of rare books at Chicago's Newberry Library and author of *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford, 1997).

"Scholars have just begun to explore the ways in which physical changes in the book have affected the history of reading. In ***The Archaeology of Medieval Bookbinding*** (Ashgate, 1999), **J.A. Szirmai** provides a synthesis of his extensive research on the subject. He describes the introduction of the protruding cover—a cover with a surface area larger than that of the pages it protects—and the evolution of the convex spine in Gothic bindings, notably in works produced at the Abbey of St. Gall. These structural changes are inextricably linked

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to the revolutionary introduction of vertical shelving in the fifteenth century and hence to the birth of modern libraries. **Henri-Jean Martin**'s ***La naissance du livre moderne: Mise en page et mise en texte du livre français (XIVe–XVIIe siècles)*** (Editions du Cercle de la Librairie, 2000) intertwines the history of the printed book with details about aspects of text and page format, such as chapter division, that are suggestive of the evolution of silent reading habits in early modern Europe. This work broadens the science of codicology by applying its principles to the printed tomes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."

Adrian Johns, professor of history at the California Institute of Technology and author of *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago, 1998).

"Any study of reading has to start with ***A History of Reading in the West*** (Massachusetts, 1999), edited by **Guglielmo Cavallo** and **Roger Chartier**. Chartier more or less invented the history of reading as a branch of scholarly investigation, and this is the first single-volume attempt to arrive at a coherent chronology of the practice, from antiquity to the present. At a more microscopic scale, an exemplary investigation is **Kevin Sharpe**'s ***Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England*** (Yale, 2000). Sharpe details his discovery of what might be the holy grail for historians of reading: a near-complete set of manuscripts recording a mid-seventeenth-century member of parliament's responses to all kinds of books, from Machiavelli to Hobbes. Sharpe's work highlights how reading leads to the articulation of ideological positions, and hence directly to action. **James Secord**'s ***Victorian Sensation: The Extraordinary Publication, Reception, and Secret Authorship of 'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation'*** (Chicago, forthcoming) tells the tale of a remarkable book that threw the Victorian world into turmoil. Secord's work promises to transform how we see the world of mid-Victorian science."

Kathleen E. Welch, professor of English at the University of Oklahoma and author of *Electric Rhetoric: Classical Rhetoric, Oralism, and a New Literacy* (MIT, 1999).

"In ***Cyberliteracy: Navigating the Internet With Awareness*** (Yale, forthcoming), **Laura J. Gurak** analyzes the Internet's four main functional components: speed, reach, anonymity, and interactivity. She uses examples from a number of Web sites to demonstrate how readers now step 'through the screen.' Another important book on the history of reading, **Andrea Lunsford** and **Lisa Ede**'s ***Singular Texts/Plural Authors: Perspectives on Collaborative Writing*** (Southern Illinois, 1990), predated—and in fact predicted—much of the collaborative reading and writing that now occurs in cyberspace."

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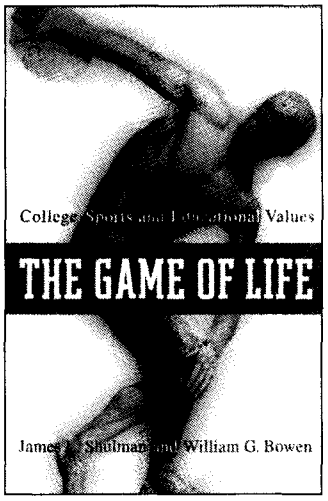

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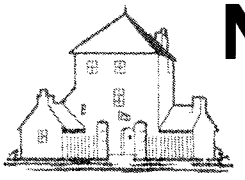

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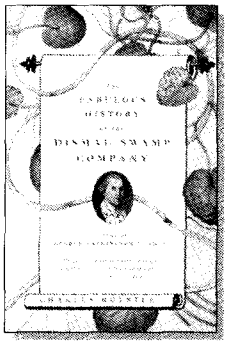

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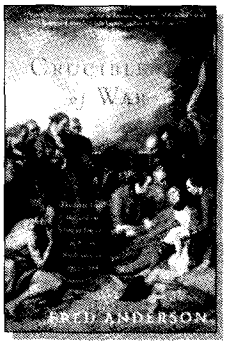

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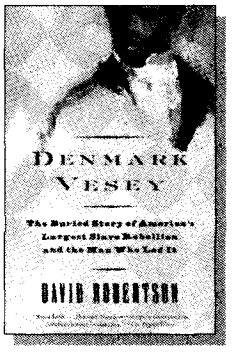

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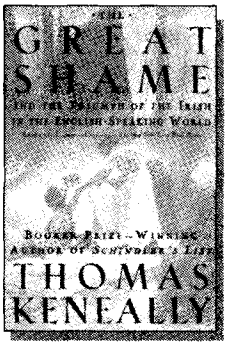

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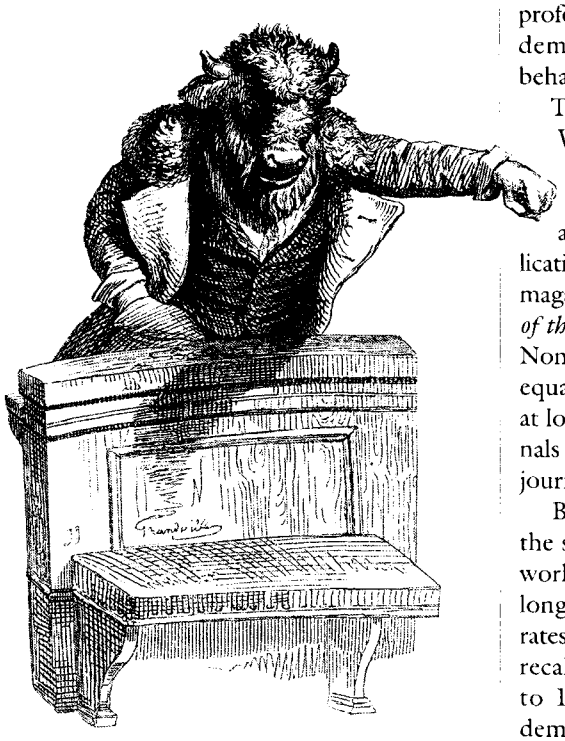

FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, THE NEWARK-BASED commercial publisher Gordon & Breach (G&B) has pursued what some have described as a curious business plan: In essence, the company has been suing a portion of its core readership. Since 1989, G&B has alleged that two scientific societies, the American Physical Society (APS) and the American Institute of Physics (AIP), conspired to disparage G&B physics journals. But after successfully battling G&B's suits in numerous courts in four countries, the societies hold a different view of the affair. "This is really about freedom of speech," says Marc Brodsky, the AIP's executive director. Ken Frazier, director of libraries at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, concurs: "The G&B lawsuits are a direct assault on academic freedom and a gross violation of professional ethics." Frazier has called for the academic community to censure G&B, whose behavior he calls "despicable."

The saga began when a retired University of Wisconsin physicist, Henry H. Barschall, started looking into the pricing of physics journals. In 1988 he completed a comparative analysis of more than two hundred publications. The study appeared in the AIP's flagship magazine, *Physics Today*, and in the APS's *Bulletin of the American Physical Society*. Its conclusion? Nonprofit society-based journals offered work equal to or better than commercial journals, and at lower subscription prices. AIP and APS journals came out near the top of the study; G&B journals fared especially badly.

Both the AIP and the APS immediately cited the study in promotional materials. Barschall's work was also embraced by librarians, who had long complained of skyrocketing subscription rates among scientific journals. But soon enough, recalls Harry Lustig, APS treasurer from 1985 to 1996, G&B attorneys delivered a stern demand to the AIP and the APS: Publish an immediate and prominent retraction of Barschall's article. Otherwise, G&B attorneys warned, there would be litigation.

Rattled by the message and wishing to avoid legal difficulties, the AIP and the APS set out to resolve the matter, according to Lustig. "Our strategy was, and still is, to try to settle," Lustig says. "We offered Gordon & Breach the opportunity to publish their objections. But we said we would give Barschall a chance to examine and counter the statements of error if he felt these were wrong, which is what is done in scientific journals." Lustig says G&B attorneys refused this and other offers. Not surprisingly, Martin Gordon, founder of Gordon & Breach, describes the negotiations differently. "We tried to settle many times," he says, "and we tried to find an easy way to get a retraction or a correction of what they had done. They just refused." He adds: "They forced us to go to the suits."

In 1989, after nearly eight months of fruitless negotiations with the AIP and the APS, G&B attorneys launched a legal blitzkrieg throughout Europe. In the spring of 1989, G&B asked a Swiss court for an injunction preventing

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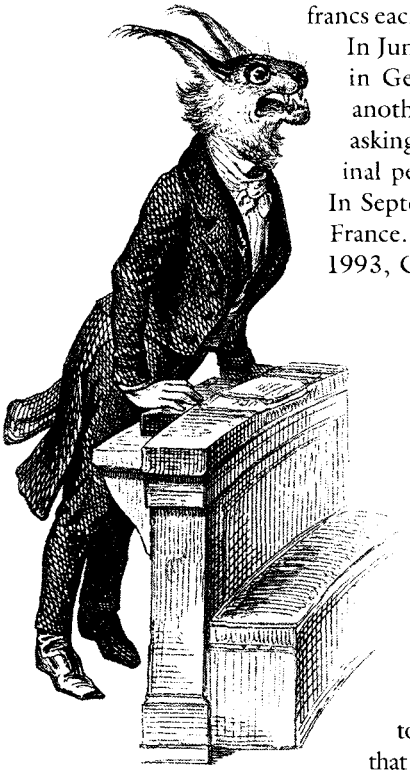

the AIP and Swiss libraries from distributing an issue of *Physics Today* that included a notice describing the negotiations with G&B. The court rejected G&B's request and even ordered the publisher to pay the libraries one hundred francs each. But this was just the beginning. In June 1989, G&B attorneys filed suit in Germany. Weeks later, they filed another suit in Switzerland, this time asking that Barschall face civil and criminal penalties for distributing his data. In September of 1989, they filed suit in France. And four years later, in September 1993, G&B tried its luck in the United States, suing under the Lanham Act, which prohibits the dissemination of false information in advertising.

Advertising? "The price survey's real intent was to compare APS and AIP journals in a favorable light against their competitors," explains Christopher Schneider, the president of G&B's marketing and advertising arm. In fact, say G&B officials, Barschall's article wasn't a price study so much as a flawed attempt to "deceive the market" into believing that rigorous statistical analysis has proven AIP and APS journals to be the best value.

G&B officials have raised various concerns about Barschall's study. They say that he compared journals of different size and scope and they also question his use of citation counts to measure a journal's impact. And, say G&B officials, Barschall, then a member of the APS and a former editor of the APS journal *Physical Review C,* had a clear conflict of interest.

Do G&B officials believe that an eminent physicist, the AIP (an umbrella organization of ten scientific societies), and the APS (the world's largest organization of physicists, with more than forty-two thousand members) set out to discredit G&B's journals? "Yes," says Martin Gordon flatly. "Or maybe we were just the best target."

"Totally absurd," says Harry Lustig of Gordon's claim, noting that there was no explicit mention of G&B in Barschall's study. "No publisher was mentioned explicitly except in the tables, and the tables showed that G&B indeed is just about the poorest performer, price-wise. But there was no intention to single out G&B."

So why, then, would G&B spend millions of dollars and eleven years pressing a false-advertising claim against two nonprofit competitors? In a word, says Lustig, "intimidation." In New York federal court, the lead attorney for the AIP and the APS, Richard Meserve, asserted that G&B was using the legal system to discourage the distribution of price studies that would shed light on G&B's pricing practices. Meserve cited several examples of intimidation by G&B, ranging from actions against the American Mathematical Society, which also did a price survey that showed G&B journals among the highest priced, to threatening letters G&B sent to individual librarians who complained about prices. In his 1997 ruling, Judge Leonard Sand found Meserve's arguments compelling. Citing one of the defendants' briefs, he concluded that "the evidence persuasively demonstrated that the present suit is but one battle in a 'global campaign by Gordon & Breach to suppress all adverse comment upon its journals.'" Sand also found that although other methods could be used, Barschall's study "reliably" measured the cost-effectiveness of the journals it covered. Sadly, Barschall did not live to see his work vindicated. After devoting a great part of his retirement to fighting the G&B suits, he was struck with an aggressive form of cancer and died in February 1997.

G&B appealed Sand's ruling, but it was upheld by the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. More recently, G&B has also lost ground in France, where a Paris appeals court delivered the latest ruling against the publisher last June. "That was really a surprise decision," says G&B's Schneider, noting that G&B had prevailed in the initial French verdict. But G&B is not giving up. Schneider confirms that the company is appealing to the Supreme Court of France, and if the Supreme Court finds in favor of G&B, the litigation will have new life. "Past precedents in France are opposed to the decision made," he says.

"It's not unexpected," says current AIP executive director Marc Brodsky when told of G&B's decision to continue the suit in France. "Every opportunity they've had to appeal, they've done so." The AIP and the APS have already spent roughly three million dollars on the G&B affair. But Brodsky says the associations will continue to fight the suit for as long as necessary. "It's about the intellectual freedom to publish articles and let scientists have their say," he explains.

Has pursuing a course of continuous litigation against both the scientific and the academic library communities hurt business for G&B's journals? "Probably it has," Gordon admits. But, he adds, "it's impossible to see *how* it has. As you know, library budgets have been cut in the last few years."

ANDREW R. ALBANESE

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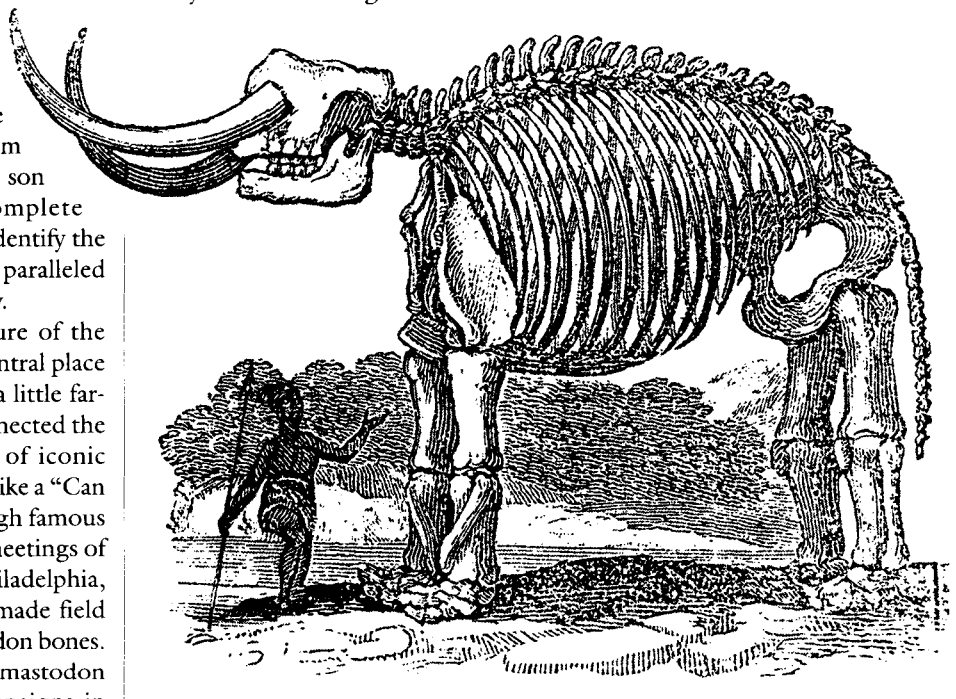
WHEN THOMAS JEFFERSON ARRIVED IN PHILADELphia for his inauguration as vice president in 1797, he brought with him not only a collection of his famous inventions but also a very large box of mastodon bones. Ten years later, President Jefferson had another set of newly unearthed mastodon bones shipped to him, and he laid them out in an unused room in the White House.

As the Oregon-based historian Paul Semonin explains in his new book, *American Monster: How the Nation's First Prehistoric Creature Became a Symbol of National Identity* (NYU), Jefferson's actions were not as idiosyncratic in his day as they may seem now. Indeed, the mastodon inspired a widespread craze in the early Republic. Think *Jurassic Park,* without the Burger King tie-ins. Between 1705, when a farmer in the Hudson River valley dug up a mysterious tooth the size of a rat, and 1801, when museum owner Charles Willson Peale and his son Rembrandt excavated the first complete skeleton, early Americans' efforts to identify the creature they called the *incognitum* paralleled their efforts to find their own identity.

Given the currently esoteric nature of the mastodon, Semonin's theory of its central place in our nation's history might sound a little farfetched. But in fact, Semonin has connected the behemoth to a surprising number of iconic national figures. His book often reads like a "Can you find the mastodon?" romp through famous scenes in early America. During the meetings of the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia, John Adams and his fellow patriots made field trips to see private collections of mastodon bones. George Washington made forays to mastodon excavations during his military campaigns in 1780; the next year, Daniel Boone carried Jefferson's request for bones to George Rogers Clark on the Kentucky frontier. Meriwether Lewis inspected a collection in Cincinnati on his way west to St. Louis in 1803; in 1807, en route to his new post as superintendent of Indian affairs in the Louisiana Territory, William Clark supervised an excavation at Big Bone Lick in Kentucky.

The mastodon, as we now know, is that elephant-like ruminant with big tusks and a beard. The beasts disappeared from North America—along with saber-toothed tigers, woolly mammoths, and other huge creatures—during the Ice Age. You can look it up on the Internet (and you can acquire a tooth on eBay for four hundred dollars). But imagine trying to identify the beast upon its discovery in 1705. What creature had a five-pound tooth? And why couldn't it still be found in the Hudson valley? Cotton Mather concluded it was a human giant mentioned in the Bible. Others guessed an elephant. Jefferson fully expected Lewis and Clark to discover a live version of the animal in the Northwest.

At the heart of Semonin's analysis is an intellectual history of the eighteenth-century religious and scientific theories that made a more accurate identification possible. American gentry drew on new conceptions of what the Flood wrought, and on the new sciences of paleontology and comparative anatomy, to conclude that the fossil behemoth was definitely prehuman, and definitely not an elephant. In 1806, the renowned French anatomist Georges Cuvier formally named the *incognitum* the mastodon.



In the most ambitious parts of his book, Semonin argues that the mastodon played a key role in the shaping of American ideology. By imagining the mastodon as the doomed king of a ferocious prehistoric world, the Founding Fathers were able to reinforce two essential beliefs: First, they assured themselves that violent rule was the natural order; and, second, they justified their intent to wipe out such savagery in this land once and for all. What was this non-elephant? It was a great ferocious carnivore of yore. "How many animals have been crushed by [its jaw]!" Rembrandt Peale marveled. Why did it go extinct? It was by God's blessing, to make way for *us.*

In fact, the notion of a moose-crushing mastodon was at least as mythical as it was factu-

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ally accurate—the mastodon was no carnivore. Never mind that the nation builders had abundant evidence that the mastodon chomped on large bushes at best. Semonin believes that a flesh-eating terror worked far better than a five-ton herbivore in their narrative. As the first in a series of savage creatures doomed to extinction, the mastodon served as the essential precursor to Native Americans and other "inferior" races. Jefferson's discussion of his measurements of mastodon bones in *Notes on the State of Virginia* was of a piece with his famous meditations on racial inferiority. The new paleontologists and comparative anatomists treated species extinction and human racial differences as one and the same inquiry. And fledgling natural history museums like Peale's displayed mastodon bones next to Indian bones and artifacts.

Jefferson et al., in sum, invented our "first prehistoric monster"—its most obvious successor being the dinosaurs, which Americans first excavated in the 1850s. Semonin contends that the Victorians created the fierce, lumbering *Tyrannosaurus rex* in the mastodon's image—and that visions of a terrifying prehistoric world continued to drive narratives of conquest. The mastodon shaped the frontier myths of the early Republic, and the ideology of Manifest Destiny, before it passed its dominion to the dinosaurs. Gathering a few roars from Darwinian theory, *T. rex* and its kind aided the emergence of cutthroat corporate economics in late-Victorian America. And Semonin finds that it's clear sailing from there—if you follow his logic—to Cold War imperialism, the American Western, the Reagan 1980s, Microsoft, and the dot-com gladiators.

The Victorians created the *Tyrannosaurus rex* [illegible]

One can quibble with Semonin that there is no single American national myth, nor just one parable of the prehistoric world. But the enduring power of these particular myths is irrefutable, and he makes a persuasive connection between our prehistory and our patriotism. Eighteenth-century Americans asked two sets of questions that continue to drive obsessions among scientists, filmmakers, the museum-going public, and five-year-old boys alike. First, what were these oversize creatures: fierce or gentle, cold-blooded or warm-blooded? Second, why did they go extinct: because they were overconfident, or because they were victims of a passing meteor? Did they trade brains for brawn in a bad Darwinian short-term bargain? Such questions are rife with moral undertones. With his book on early Americans' fascination with the mastodon, Semonin extends by a century the history of our parables of the Big and Extinct.

JENNIFER PRICE

SWEDEN LOWDOWN

IT WOULD BE NICE IF THE SWEDISH ACADEMY, the organization responsible for awarding the Nobel Prize in literature, consisted entirely of superhuman beings, each of them fluent in dozens of languages, possessed of great literary insight, and blessed with the finest sense of propriety and decorum. But as a recently published memoir makes all too clear, the academy members can be just as vain, capricious, and self-serving as the characters in a novel.

This September, the seventy-nine-year-old novelist and critic Lars Gyllensten published his memoir *Minnen, bara minnen* (Memories, mere memories) in Sweden, causing a considerable ruckus. The most shocking statement in Gyllensten's book is his confirmation of a long-standing rumor: The 1978 death of academy member and Nobel Prize winner Harry Martinson was a suicide. Martinson committed hara-kiri by slicing open his stomach with a pair of scissors—a story that Martinson's daughters gave Gyllensten permission to reveal at long last.

Gyllensten argues that the suicide was prompted, at least in part, by a controversy surrounding Martinson's Nobel. The Swedish press had doggedly criticized the academy for recognizing Martinson, a man whose literary achievement was not considered of Nobel caliber; the choice was thought all the more damnable because Martinson was one of the academy's own. Wounded by these allegations, Martinson became morbidly depressed, according to Gyllensten.

No less controversial than his revelation about Martinson's death, however, has been Gyllensten's

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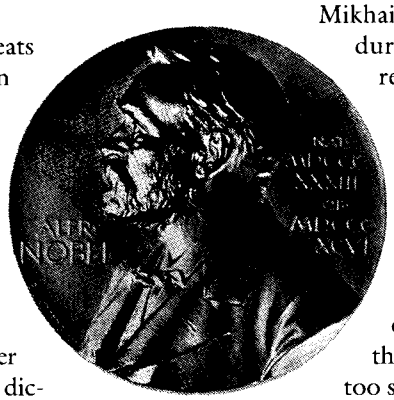
bitter condemnation of the academy itself. Gyllensten joined the academy in 1966, when he was a professor of histology at Stockholm's Karolinska Institute, and served as its permanent secretary from 1977 to 1986. As he explains in his book, he withdrew from the academy in 1989, soon after its weak public response to the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. "The academy made a very vague statement and did not even mention Rushdie by name, or the death sentence," Gyllensten explains. "I think the academy should have spoken clearly against it."

But, Gyllensten insists, there were many other factors that contributed to his decision to leave. Chief among these grievances, he writes in *Minnen, bara minnen,* was his stormy relationship with the philologist Sture Allén, who in 1986 succeeded Gyllensten as the permanent secretary—in effect, the academy's public spokesperson. (Despite the title, a permanent secretary must relinquish the position when he or she turns seventy.)



In his book, Gyllensten repeats an accusation he first made on Swedish television in 1993: He claims that Allén diverted academy funds to Göteborg University's Institute of Linguistics, where Allén had served as a professor of computational linguistics. The money was purportedly used to finance language surveys that later formed the basis of commercial dictionaries. But as Horace Engdahl, the current permanent secretary, points out, Gyllensten has never presented proof to back up his allegations.

When Gyllensten first made this charge, the academy officially denied any wrongdoing. Today, Allén simply says, "Such a book speaks for itself." Engdahl adds: "Gyllensten's story is not held to be accurate by the members who were themselves witnesses to the events he touches on."

But Allén's directorship from 1986 to 1998 clearly did give rise to discontent. Two other members of the academy, Kerstin Ekman and Werner Aspenstroem, stopped attending meetings at the same time that Gyllensten did. Ekman made it clear that disgust with Allén's handling of the Rushdie affair was the reason for her departure. Aspenstroem, who has since passed away, said he was simply tired of all the feuding.

In 1996, a fourth member, Knut Ahnlund, abandoned the academy and blamed the move on Allén, saying he would return only if Allén left. Defending Allén, Lars Loennroth, a professor of comparative literature at Göteborg, claims that Gyllensten himself may be responsible for the academy's internal feuds. "His dictatorial and hateful attitude as leader of the academy kept some of our best writers out of that society, since Gyllensten wanted to be surrounded by his own yes-men," he claims. "Gyllensten himself wanted Allén to succeed him, because he thought Allén would do whatever he wanted—he practically says so in his book! But when Allén and the other academy members did not follow his lead, they became his enemies."

All the bickering isn't necessarily bad, according to Burton Feldman, author of the recently published *The Nobel Prize: A History of Genius, Controversy, and Prestige* (Arcade). "Gyllensten claims the academy was more harmonious in the 1960s and 1970s. But a congenial committee isn't necessarily wiser," Feldman says, noting that the academy honored lesser writers like John Steinbeck and the Russian novelist Mikhail Aleksandrovich Sholokhov during those calm decades. In recent years, the academy has been widely criticized for giving the award to the left-wing Italian playwright Dario Fo and other writers of contested talent. But could it be otherwise? The Swedish critic Carl Rudbeck feels many observers, especially those in the foreign press, take the award too seriously: "Academy members are not all geniuses. Some have very limited knowledge of literature, and others don't seem to have any interest in it at all."

The most recent award has done little to stop complaints about the committee. Swedish journalists have asserted that the experimental Chinese writer Gao Xingjian was given the prize this year primarily because of ardent lobbying by academy member Goran Malmqvist, a professor emeritus of Chinese at Stockholm University. "Part of my job as an academy member is to translate excellent Chinese writers and talk about them," Malmqvist replies. "It would be ridiculous if I did not." But Malmqvist has also been accused of helping a friend, the publisher Kjell Peterson, acquire the Swedish rights to Xingjian's work before the prize was announced. Malmqvist explains that he did turn Peterson on to Xingjian, but it was Peterson himself who decided to obtain the rights to Xingjian's work. "We don't leak in the academy," Malmqvist says. "We keep the secrets to ourselves."

MAURA KELLY

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DUBLIN JEOPARDY

ONE HUNDRED FIVE YEARS AGO, A SMALL GROUP of people in the Irish village of Ballyvadlea aided, encouraged, or silently watched Michael Cleary as he burned his young wife alive. But none of them seemed to think that the woman killed was actually Bridget Cleary. In the ensuing trial, the defendants insisted that fairies had stolen Cleary's wife and replaced her with one of their own—a changeling. Michael Cleary was convicted of manslaughter. But he appeared honestly surprised that his wife was not waiting on a nearby hill, released by her kidnappers and ready to come back to him.

With its rich historical and cultural overtones, the Cleary case certainly seems ripe for a full-length scholarly study—but two of them, published within weeks of each other? *The Burning of Bridget Cleary: A True Story,* by Angela Bourke (Viking, August), and *The Cooper's Wife Is Missing: The Trials of Bridget Cleary,* by Joan Hoff and Marian Yeates (Basic Books, September), share more than unlikely timing (the U.K. edition of Bourke's book actually came out in 1999). A *San Francisco Chronicle* review notes the similarities between one of Bourke's chapter titles, "Laborers, Priests, and Peelers," and one of Hoff and Yeates's, "Peasants, Peelers, and Priests." And the connections between the two books don't stop there. In fact, circling the same patch of scholarly territory, the three authors collided more than once.

Oddly enough, though Bourke barely knows Hoff or Yeates, the three authors have lived in the same house. When Bourke, a senior lecturer in Irish at University College Dublin, spent a year at Harvard in 1992–93, she let her Ranelagh house to Hoff, at the time a visiting professor at UCD (Yeates visited briefly). Although Bourke had taken an interest in the Cleary case for the better part of twenty years, it was only when she returned from Harvard in 1993 that she decided to write a book on the subject. Hoff, currently a visiting professor of history at the College of William and Mary and a well-known scholar of the Nixon presidency, says she discovered the Cleary story in 1995 through an earlier Hubert Butler essay called "The Eggman and the Fairies." When she decided to write a book, she asked Yeates, a family-history writer, to help make her "dull, dry facts...readable."

Tenure Disputes

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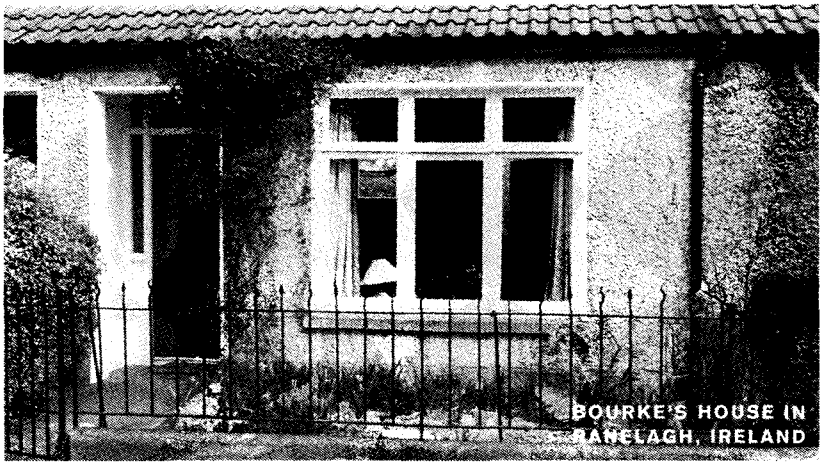
In early 1997, Bourke heard from a mutual friend that Hoff planned to write a book about Cleary. That March, Hoff arrived in Ireland to pursue her research, and she happened on a flyer for a Bridget Cleary lecture that Bourke was to give at the Royal Irish Academy. Hoff left a message on Bourke's answering machine, regretting that she could not attend the talk and requesting a copy of the paper. Bourke recalls feeling "a little bit protective" of her work. In a letter, she declined Hoff's request on the grounds that she had delivered the talk from notes, some of which comprised new research for her forthcoming book. Hoff wrote back, assuring Bourke that their books would not overlap: Hers would be a social, legal, and political history, while she assumed Bourke read the Cleary affair as an instance of domestic violence.

In response, Bourke let Hoff know that her book was not about spousal abuse; it, too, was to be a comprehensive study of the case and its context. She reiterated her reluctance to share unpublished material. Says Hoff, "It was clear she thought she had a monopoly on the topic." Bourke protests: "Not for a moment" did she think that Hoff should not have written a book on this topic. "Nobody owns the raw materials."



BOURKE'S HOUSE IN DANELAGH, IRELAND

COURTESY OF ANGELA BOURKE

Ultimately, both books would place Cleary's death within the larger context of Irish politics. "The Tipperary Horror," as the papers came to call it, happened just as traditional Irish ways of life were being squeezed out by a modern culture that prized literacy over orality, pharmaceuticals over alternative medicine, and British jurisprudence over native justice systems. There was also a Gaelic revival underway at the time, with the likes of W.B. Yeats transposing Irish tales into English. After the Cleary case, Bourke's book argues, that very legacy seemed

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an obstacle to Irish autonomy: Nationalist newspapers played down the events in Ballyvadlea, especially the part about the fairies, and Unionist newspapers eagerly used the story to question Irish capacity for home rule. Bourke first made this connection between the case and its politically loaded coverage in a 1995 article. Hoff and Yeates's book makes the same connection.

"Perhaps she believed she was a changeling," write Hoff and Yeates. "And maybe it was true."

Not surprisingly, both books are also largely devoted to the hearings that took place between March and July 1895. The statements of witnesses and the accused illuminate the stages of Bridget's mysterious illness, her husband's exasperation with a drunken doctor and an indifferent priest, his resorting to a local "cure," and, finally, the particulars of why Michael Cleary threw paraffin oil on his wife in front of a room full of her relatives before stuffing her into the fireplace. The authors of *The Cooper's Wife Is Missing* declare that they have reconstructed these depositions and cross-examinations with the most "systematic analysis ever undertaken." But despite their care with the depositions—revealing, for example, that Michael was not given adequate representation in court—Hoff and Yeates do not have Bourke's sophistication or sensitivity when it comes to Irish traditional culture. Folklore, in Hoff and Yeates's book, translates as "heathen lore," "evil superstitions," "the pagan subculture of violence," and "the occult fairy faith of ancient Ireland."

Here begin the major differences between the two books. Bourke sees Bridget Cleary as a victim of murder. Hoff and Yeates see her as an agent in her own destruction and imply that she was not that ill during the eleven days toward the end of which the priest administered last rites. Instead, they write, "Perhaps she believed she was a changeling.... And maybe it was true."

Michael Cleary was sentenced to twenty years; released from prison in 1910, he fled to Montreal and was never heard from again. Other mysteries remain. Why didn't Bridget Cleary scream when she died? Why did she go alone to Kylenagranagh Hill, a site associated with fairies? Yeates suggests that Bourke deliberately evades such questions: "Bourke does what the Irish do. They always offer a rational explanation. 'Now we can close this case. It's done. It's a case of spousal abuse, a loss of symbolic capital.' But then they kind of turn to each other and say, 'Yeah, but we know it was really the fairies.'"

A proverb Bourke cites suggests an alternative: "Bíonn dhá insint ar gach scéal"—"There are two ways of telling every story."

VARESE LAYZER

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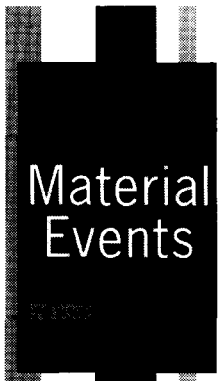

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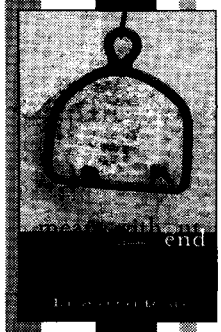

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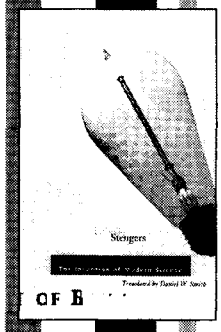

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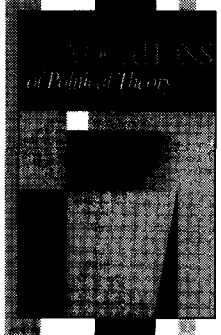

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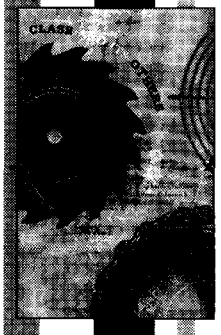

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PET THEORY

BY **STEPHEN MIHM**

DO CATS CAUSE SCHIZOPHRENIA?

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"I THINK CATS ARE GREAT," SAYS E. FULLER Torrey. His office decor would seem to confirm this statement: A cat poster hangs on one wall; a cat calendar sits on his desk; and a framed picture of a friend's cat leans against the windowsill. He even admits to having a "cat library" at home.

But Torrey's interest in felines is a bit different from that of your typical cat lover. That's because Torrey, a psychiatry professor at the Uniformed Services University of Health Science and the enfant terrible of mental health research, believes that *Felis domestica* may carry infectious diseases that could cause schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. "My wife thinks I'm going to be assassinated by

cat owners," says Torrey with a sigh. "In fact, I *like* cats. Unfortunately, if we are correct that they transmit infections..." Here his voice trails off, and he pensively fingers his closely cropped beard.

Torrey often speaks in a self-deprecating manner of his "delusional" notions, but he's dead serious about the cat connection. He thinks "typhoid tabbies" are passing along *Toxoplasma gondii,* a parasite that causes brain lesions and, if Torrey is right, schizophrenia.

Torrey first made the argument nearly thirty years ago. "It was considered psychotic," he admits. But since then, his ideas, though still outside the mainstream, have attracted converts, most notably the Johns Hopkins virologist Robert Yolken, with whom he now collaborates. Together, they're trying to prove that toxoplasmosis is but one of several infectious diseases that cause most cases of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. It helps their case that previous explanations—bad mothering, bad genes—have proven deficient to varying degrees. But Torrey and Yolken have also uncovered some hard evidence to support their claims, and they are about to put their theory to the test with clinical trials of drugs that are new to the psychopharmacological arsenal: antibiotics and antivirals similar to those used by AIDS patients. If the duo finds that such drugs alter the course of schizophrenia, Yolken observes, their results "would represent a major advance in the treatment of this devastating disease as well as in understanding its basic etiology."

"SCHIZOPHRENIA is a cruel disease," Torrey has written, with considerable understatement. Although it affects only 1 percent of the population, schizophrenia is among the most debilitating forms of mental illness. Trapped in a world of private delusions, a schizophrenic might cling, for example, to the belief that he is Jesus Christ, or that the government has implanted a monitoring device in his mouth during a routine dental procedure. Visual and auditory hallucinations can range from the terrifying to the merely strange: gigantic spiders, voices that insult or instruct. Some schizophrenics withdraw, becoming mute or catatonic; others remain communicative but incoherent, jumping from one topic to another without logical connections.

With little or no warning, schizophrenia usually manifests itself in patients between the ages of sixteen and thirty. From then on, the illness waxes and wanes, with symptoms generally becoming less severe as the patient ages. Psychotherapy is of little help to schizophrenics, but medication and constant medical care enable over 50 percent to make a full recovery. Still, relapses are common, and many patients spend their lives in halfway houses and institutions. Approximately 40 percent of schizophrenics don't get the help they need and end up on the streets or in prisons—or committing suicide.

There has never been a consensus on schizophrenia's etiology or cause. Many nineteenth-century psychiatrists thought it was a biological disorder; some speculated that it might have an infectious origin. As far back as 1845, the French neurologist Jean E. Esquirol wrote that "mental alienation is epidemic." He added: "It is certain that there are years when...insanity seems suddenly to extend to a great number of individuals." In 1874, the *American Journal of Insanity* published a lengthy brief titled "On the Germ-Theory of Disease." By the early twentieth century, doctors like Eugen Bleuler had suggested that "the connection of [schizophrenia] to infectious process equally needs further study." An outbreak of psychoses after the 1918 influenza epidemic and the discovery that syphilis could cause dementia lent further credence to such theories. In 1922, the psychiatrist Karl Menninger hypothesized that schizophrenia was "in most instances" the by-product of viral encephalitis.

Menninger later became a prominent Freudian psychoanalyst, following a career trajectory that mirrored a larger movement in American psychiatry away from biological explanations of mental illness. By the 1950s, Freudian thought had solidified its grip on the American psychiatric profession. That also happened to be the time when Torrey first began thinking of a career in psychiatry.

As he tells it, the formative event for him came between his second and third years at Princeton. His sister, who was due to start college that fall, began hallucinating and yelling, "The British are coming!" The diagnosis was acute schizophrenia. "My mother was told that it was because my father had died," Torrey says with disgust. "I thought, 'This is absurd—a lot of people's fathers die and they don't develop schizophrenia.' There was this disconnect between what I was looking at and what I was being told."

As Torrey wrapped up his degree at Princeton and went on to medical school at McGill, he began seriously to contemplate a career in psychiatry. After two years as a Peace Corps doctor in Ethiopia and a year in the South Bronx helping to set up one of the area's first neighborhood

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health centers, Torrey began a psychiatry residency in Stamford, Connecticut. "It looked to me as if psychiatry was at least twenty years behind the rest of medicine," he recalls. "It was more likely to move and be exciting during my practicing lifetime."

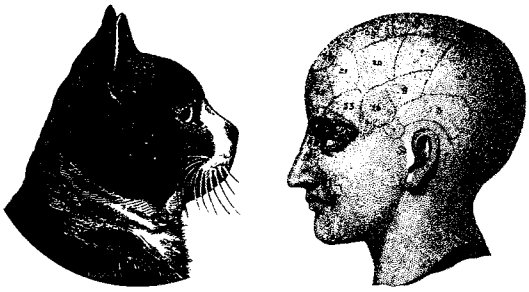
That wasn't what attracted most people to the field in the 1960s. Says Torrey, "Psychiatry was the thing you could do if you found yourself in medical school and realized that you had made a terrible mistake—that giving people rectal exams was pretty unsavory and not what you wanted to do. You could still be paid to be a doctor and talk to people about their problems." Those problems didn't include schizophrenia, Torrey remembers: "To specialize in schizophrenia was about the lowest form of psychiatric practice."

Torrey was undeterred. Not long after he went to work as a special assistant to the director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), he attracted controversy by publishing a bruising attack on Freudian psychoanalysis. In *The Death of Psychiatry* (Chilton, 1974), Torrey argued that psychiatry should either limit itself to the treatment of patients with severe brain disorders—schizophrenia, bipolar disorders—or abandon its medical pretensions altogether. In 1976, he moved from NIMH to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., where he achieved considerable renown as an advocate for the seriously mentally ill. He also helped found the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, a nationwide patient advocacy group.

The turning point in Torrey's career came in 1983, when he published two books: *Surviving Schizophrenia,* which soon became the authoritative text for patients and families; and *The Roots of Treason,* a biography of Ezra Pound based on research conducted at St. Elizabeth's. The second book, which was nominated for an award by the National Book Critics Circle, was inspired by rumors that Pound had sought refuge at St. Elizabeth's after World War II to avoid standing trial for treason. When Torrey researched the case, he discovered that a hospital administrator had colluded to protect Pound by declaring him insane. It was a great piece of detective work, but the book earned Torrey a demotion at St. Elizabeth's. Disillusioned, he retired two years later and began pursuing his unorthodox theories of schizophrenia. That meant getting inside the brain of the schizophrenic—literally.

"THE BRAIN is in a very inconvenient place," says Torrey, guiding me up the walkway to a boxy white building on the grounds of the Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. "People just don't like you opening up their heads and looking around while they're alive." This building, he tells me, houses a solution to that problem. He opens a door and we enter what looks and smells like the maintenance area of an indoor pool. "The Navy has a dive chamber here," says Torrey, pointing to something that looks like a beached bathysphere in the middle of a large warehouse. "We're sharing space with them for now."

This is home to the Stanley Foundation Brain Bank and Neuropathology Consortium's laboratories. Scattered



throughout the building's corridors and storerooms are some fifty-five freezers containing the brains of about 385 people—schizophrenics, manic depressives, people with severe depression, and so-called normal controls. The bank obtains the brains with the assistance of designated medical examiners and the permission of surviving family members. Each brain comes with a complete set of medical records, family medical histories, and other clinical information. The brains are then made available to mental illness researchers worldwide, including Torrey and his colleagues. The whole undertaking, along with a number of related projects, is funded by Theodore and Vada Stanley, wealthy philanthropists who made their money selling mail-order collectibles. (In one of his many roles, Torrey is the executive director of the Stanley Foundation, an organization that dispensed some twenty-one million dollars in research funds last year.)

As we wind our way down hallways packed with gigantic freezers, Torrey stops to turn on the light in what looks like a storage closet. "Here are the brains," he says, pointing to countless plastic pails stacked on metal shelves. "We put half of each brain in formalin and half in the freezers." Torrey turns out the lights. "Sometimes I take a brain to show my students. They always enjoy that."

We enter the room where most of his staff work. Torrey is in his element, clapping pathologists on the shoulder, joking with them, seemingly oblivious (unlike me) to the business at hand: carving up brains with what looks disturbingly like the meat slicer used at the local deli. The staff are equally upbeat, even when describing the downside of the work. "It can be a little depressing at times," admits Dr. Maree Webster, who runs the bank. "Many of the brains are from suicides, that sort of thing. It's really tragic."

The Brain Bank is the culmination of Torrey's dream to study schizophrenia from the inside out. He hopes that the collection will ultimately lead researchers to the cause of the disease. As for himself, he's hoping that one day he and his colleagues will find their hypothetical virus, though, as Webster admits, "it's a little like trying to find a needle in a haystack. The brain is a big place."

And viruses are pretty small.

TORREY DATES his obsession with infectious disease to the early 1970s. "I was becoming aware of proven cases of viral encephalitis that had been diagnosed as cases of schizophrenia or cases of manic depressive illness," he recalls. Torrey discovered some of the cases in the work of Menninger and others near the turn of the century. It was also during the 1970s that the future Nobel Prize winner Daniel Carleton Gajdusek published some of his first research on so-called slow viruses—pathogens that lie quiescent for twenty or thirty years before emerging as full-blown infections.

Intrigued, Torrey met with Gajdusek. In conversation, the elder scientist mentioned a trip he had made to the highlands of Papua New Guinea to catalog neurological disorders. He told Torrey that he had never found a cut-and-dried case of schizophrenia there, despite the fact that the disease is supposed to afflict about 1 percent of the world's population. Torrey himself made several trips and confirmed

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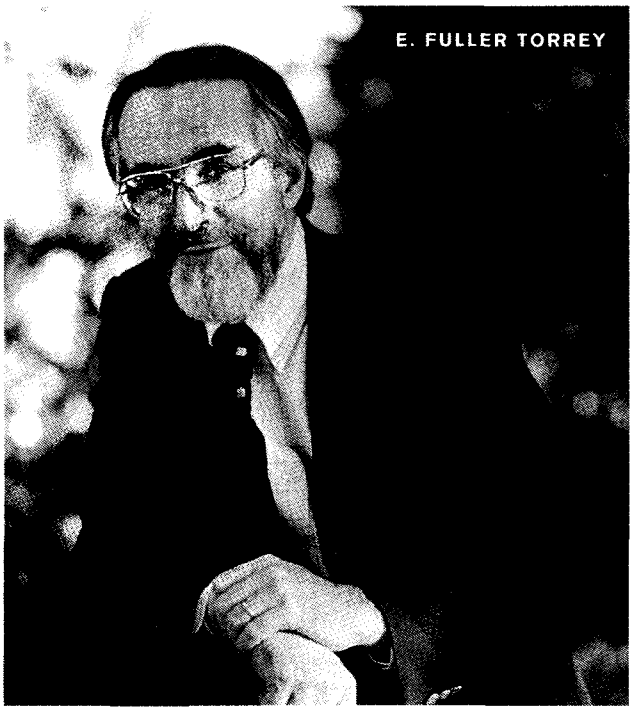
as much. "But on the coast," he recounts, "where there had been missions and contact with outsiders for a hundred years, you found occasional cases." To Torrey, that raised the tantalizing possibility that some kind of infectious agent was at work.

Torrey's theory started to look even more plausible when he began to collaborate with Robert Yolken, who now runs the Stanley Division of Developmental Neurovirology, based at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center. Yolken, a summa cum laude graduate of Harvard who stayed on for a medical degree, is a study in contrasts with Torrey. Whereas Torrey spins stories and lingers on words for effect, Yolken speaks without affect at an extraordinarily rapid rate, as though his tongue can barely keep pace with his brain. Pictures of ski vacations with his family and Torrey are taped to the shelves above his computer.

When the two scientists began working together in the 1980s, genetic explanations had usurped traditional psychoanalytic theories about the cause of schizophrenia. The new biological paradigm held that it was only a matter of time before some hypothetical "schizophrenia gene" would be identified, solving the mystery. But Torrey and Yolken remained skeptical. There were some things that genetics couldn't explain. For starters, several studies had shown that children born in urban areas were more likely to develop schizophrenia than those born in rural regions. Household crowding, too, had been demonstrated to be a risk factor. And both urban living and household crowding increase exposure to infectious agents.

Schizophrenia also appeared to correlate with birthdays. More than 250 epidemiological studies, including some of Torrey's own, have demonstrated that both schizophrenic and manic depressive patients are between 5 and 15 percent more likely to have been born in the winter or spring months. Part of that statistical bump, in Torrey's opinion, could be attributed to the increased rate of viral infection in the colder months. "The seasonality data make the geneticists very uncomfortable," says Torrey.

Paul Ewald, a professor of biology at Amherst College and a specialist in infectious diseases, is a bit more blunt. "With schizophrenia, you have seasonal correlations, which is a telltale sign of infectious agents. There are not that many things that can explain that association," he says. "Unless you believe in astrology."



E. FULLER TORREY

Ewald is little known in mental health circles, but his theories have already earned him considerable attention among infectious disease specialists. He and his collaborator, Gregory Cochran, believe that many diseases—heart disease, various forms of cancer, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, most major psychiatric diseases—are often caused by infectious agents. Their reasoning is simple: Any gene that adversely affects an individual's ability to reproduce and care for offspring will ultimately fall victim to natural selection. Therefore, severe common diseases—those having an incidence higher than one in a thousand—can't be chalked up simply to bad genes. Some kind of environmental factor, either infectious or noninfectious, must play a role as well.

Schizophrenia, says Ewald, must be one of these diseases, because it seriously diminishes a person's reproductive fitness. At the same time, neither he nor Torrey and Yolken suggest that genetic factors are irrelevant. After all, there's plenty of evidence that genes play a role in schizophrenia. One measure of that is the monozygotic twin test, which yields the percentage of identical twins who both develop a particular disease. A concordance rate of 100 percent is evidence of a purely genetic disease, one that is little influenced by environmental factors like infection, nutrition, or toxins. Huntington's disease, for example, has a concordance rate of 100 percent. Similarly, Down's syndrome has a concordance rate of 95 percent; autism, 82 percent. By contrast, a viral infection like polio has a concordance rate of only 36 percent among identical twins—thus, genetics plays some role, but most of the blame lies with the polio virus. What about schizophrenia? According to Torrey's (controversial) calculations, the concordance rate averages approximately 28 percent. With a rate that low, says Ewald, "we have to look elsewhere."

For Torrey, Ewald, and others, that means looking for some kind of infectious agent that may exploit a genetic weakness when invading a host. This interplay of genetics and infectious disease is complex and has a lot to do with whether a faulty gene permits the virus, bacterium, or parasite in question to lock onto cells. As Yolken explains it, these "genetic determinants" are different from those involved in typical "genetic" diseases like Huntington's in that a person's genetic susceptibility doesn't surface unless he or

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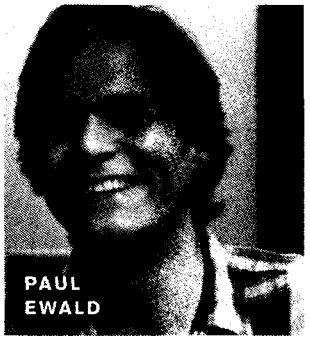
she comes into contact with a particular environmental factor. In theory, that's why one identical twin and not the other will come down with schizophrenia: Only one is exposed to the "schizovirus."

Torrey says that these theories aren't news to most people in the medical profession, particularly those working with infectious diseases. "Psychiatrists," he notes in an exasperated tone, "are the only ones that are surprised by this."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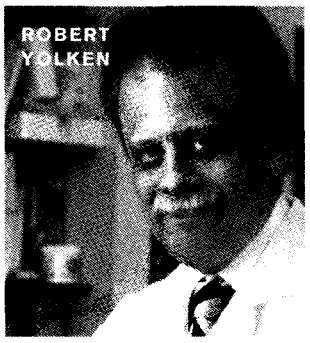
ROBERT YOLKEN

TORREY IS talking about cats again. "I've given talks on the cat stuff and people's response is almost universal: 'I'm not surprised—I've known my cat is schizophrenic for years!'" He chuckles. "One talk I gave at a department of psychiatry, a fellow came up to me and said, 'I don't want you to repeat this, but the former chairman of our department of psychiatry was convinced that his cat was hallucinating, so he gave him liquid Thorazine and it really seemed to help.'" Torrey looks at me and smiles. "People find cats strange, so they don't find this idea so odd."

Yolken, who owns two cats, is less critical of our feline friends, but he agrees that there may be a connection. "Cat feces are the biggest source of toxoplasma infections in the United States," he says, preparing to guide me through a PowerPoint presentation at his desk. Toxoplasma, Yolken informs me, is one of the more adaptable parasites, able to set up shop in any number of mammals. Although most humans can battle, or even carry, toxoplasma without ill effects, the parasite poses a special danger to people with compromised immune systems. It is also hazardous to pregnant mothers and their fetuses, causing serious brain lesions and retardation in infants when contracted during the first trimester of pregnancy. That's why doctors now forbid expectant mothers to clean litter boxes. Torrey and Yolken speculate that a toxoplasma infection contracted during pregnancy or infancy could lie dormant in some patients' central nervous system, only to be reactivated when the host's immune system is compromised by a secondary infection in late adolescence.

Cats, meanwhile, don't seem to suffer toxoplasma's ill effects. They pick up the parasite from eating infected rodents, typically rats or mice. In the rodents themselves, the parasite produces brain lesions and a host of rather odd behaviors. Infected rats, for example, lose their instinctive fear of cat urine, making them more likely to be caught and eaten by feline predators. As Ewald explains, "The parasite gets to the next host in its life cycle by messing up the rodents' minds." Once in the cat, the parasites infect the lining of the small intestine, reproduce asexually, and encase themselves in a sturdy membrane. These oocysts, or spores, are then shed in the cat's feces. The cycle begins anew when human beings and other mammals become infected from handling the feces or, in some cases, breathing and swallowing the airborne spores.

Torrey first postulated that toxoplasmosis might cause schizophrenia in the 1970s, when he read several articles attributing an outbreak of multiple sclerosis in the Faeroe Islands to the introduction of dogs there during World War II. Could indoor pets like cats, which had become widely popular only in the nineteenth century, also be reservoirs of infectious agents? Torrey, who had recently completed a book manuscript arguing that in the late nineteenth century schizophrenia and bipolar disorder went from being rare diseases to relatively common ones, became convinced that cats were central to that story. "The cat craze began with the cat shows in the late nineteenth century," he explains. "And when I went back and looked at what we know about cats as pets, it corresponded almost perfectly to what we know about the rise of psychosis."

Eager to test the theory, he and Yolken conducted a study in the early 1990s wherein parents of schizophrenics and nonschizophrenics were asked whether they owned a cat during pregnancy or when their offspring were young. That study revealed a higher incidence of cat ownership among the parents of children who developed schizophrenia (51 percent) versus those who did not (38 percent). A second study, much larger in scope, looked into nineteen different factors, including cat ownership, dog ownership, complications during pregnancy, breast feeding, and urban versus rural residence. Only five of the variables proved statistically significant, cat ownership among them (52 percent of those who developed schizophrenia had lived with cats versus 42 percent of the nonschizophrenics). Dog ownership, by contrast, was marginally more common among nonschizophrenics (78 percent) than among schizophrenics (73 percent).

Such epidemiological data are further supported by a recent study by Yolken and Stephen Buka of the Harvard School of Public Health. The two stumbled onto medical records and blood samples taken from some fifty-five thousand pregnant women taken between 1959 and 1966 as part of a study on the causes of cerebral palsy. Buka tracked down about twenty-five hundred families from Providence, Rhode Island, who took part in the study. Among these families, twenty-seven children had exhibited psychoses. Buka matched these with some fifty-four controls of the same age, sex, race, and month and year of birth. Yolken then subjected the blood samples of both groups to a battery of tests for different antibodies. The mothers of the children who later developed psychoses were approximately 4.5 times more likely to have antibodies to toxoplasmosis than the mothers of the healthy controls.

"It's been known for a long time that toxo can get into the brain," says Yolken. But can it cause schizophrenia? One bit of evidence, he says, comes from the AIDS epidemic. "It turns out," he explains, "that about 30 percent of the adult population is toxo-positive"—that is, has antibodies to toxoplasmosis—"and that if you suppress our immune systems enough, we'll get toxoplasmosis. Most HIV patients who are toxo-positive will eventually show signs of toxoplasmosis." Today many such patients get medication to prevent this, but a decade ago, Yolken recalls, "we saw massive toxo." He thinks it was probably there all along, hibernating in the brain. So far, his and Torrey's attempts to find evidence of toxoplasma in the brains of schizophrenics

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have failed. "The brain is a big place," says Yolken with a sigh. "And it doesn't take much toxo to start an infection."

Of the other diseases that Yolken tried to correlate with schizophrenia—rubella, influenza, cytomegalovirus, chlamydia, and herpes simplex 2 (HSV-2)—only herpes was significant. Tests showed that mothers of schizophrenic children were 5.8 times more likely to have antibodies to HSV-2 than mothers of the healthy controls.

How might a herpes infection contracted in the womb lead to mental illness years later? As Yolken sees it, the age when most schizophrenics first develop symptoms suggests exposure to some sort of "infectious agent which has a higher rate of transmission in late adolescence and early adulthood." Yolken hypothesizes that the herpes virus remains quiescent in the brain until adolescence, when it is triggered by the Epstein-Barr virus that causes mononucleosis, also known as the kissing disease. Another theory holds that it is reactivated by another version of itself picked up in sexual contact. How such an infection translates into schizophrenia is still a matter of considerable speculation. Yolken is wary of saying that herpes causes schizophrenia. "These represent complex disorders," he says.

Adding to the complexity, Yolken thinks that other kinds of viruses also play a role in severe mental disorders. He and Torrey have just completed a study in which more than 17 percent of patients who recently manifested schizophrenia had antibodies to the multiple sclerosis retrovirus. Equally interesting to Yolken is evidence that in nearly 30 percent of recent-onset schizophrenics, endogenous retroviruses had made copies of themselves. In both cases, the rate for the controls was zero percent.

Endogenous retroviruses, admits Yolken, "are not well known in the scientific community." They are viruses that are incorporated into the human genome. In other words, he explains, at some point in evolutionary history, "progenitors of humans or primates got infected with a retrovirus, and the retrovirus got into the genome and stayed in the genome." As a consequence, foreign bits of genetic material are scattered through the human genome. "In most cases, they don't seem to do very much," Yolken says reassuringly. But it seems that in some cases they can be activated by other viruses. Then the little stowaways begin to

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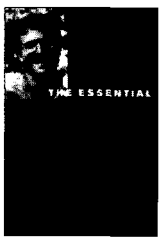

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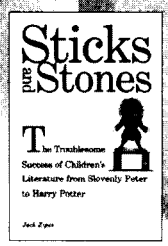

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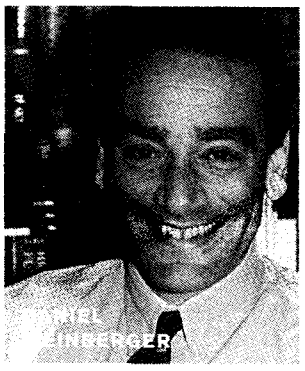
make copies of themselves, perhaps wreaking havoc on adjacent genes and, Yolken conjectures, triggering schizophrenia.

If schizophrenia is caused by a virus, can it be cured? "What we don't know is whether the infection is reversible," says Yolken. "If the damage is done in childhood, then treating patients as adults may not work." Still, he and Torrey are going to try: They are administering acyclovir, an antiviral drug better known for its efficacy against herpes infections, to groups of schizophrenic patients. They're encouraged by several previous studies, including one of their own, which have shown that antipsychotic drugs like Thorazine, Haldol, and clozapine inhibit viral replication. Torrey and Yolken hypothesize that the drugs' efficacy may have something to do with their antiviral properties. In a subsequent trial, they will administer antibiotics customarily used to treat toxoplasmosis.

ALTHOUGH Torrey and Yolken's theory that an infectious disease causes schizophrenia has gained some acceptance, or at least respect, it is still far from the prevailing view. Torrey in particular has many critics, even among colleagues with whom he has collaborated.

Take Irving Gottesman, a professor of psychology and clinical pediatrics at the University of Virginia and a major proponent of genetic explanations of schizophrenia. The two men maintain a friendly relationship despite their differences. "The thing that keeps us together," explains Gottesman, "is that we have common enemies: the Freudians, the sociologists, the cultural anthropologists"—anyone, in other words, who wants to ascribe schizophrenia to nonbiological causes. They frequently co-author articles attacking what they perceive to be misallocations of mental health research funds. But when it comes to explaining schizophrenia, they part ways.



COURTESY OF DANIEL WEINBERGER

Gottesman casts doubt on Torrey's data for the rate of concordance for schizophrenia among identical twins. "He's always trying to lower the rates," claims Gottesman. "I'm just doing it the way geneticists have always done." Gottesman's statistical method, known among geneticists as probandwise concordance, samples admissions to a particular hospital. If one member of an identical-twin pair shows up with schizophrenia and the other member shows up at a different hospital with schizophrenia, too, then the twin pair counts as one concordant pair. But if one twin shows up at the hospital and the other twin shows up at the *same* hospital, each twin counts as a concordant pair, thus yielding two pairs instead of one. This method produces a concordance rate that's close to 50 percent. "Geneticists use probandwise to avoid errors when comparing rates with the general population rate," explains Gottesman.

"I call it a system of double counting,"

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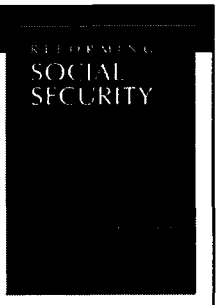

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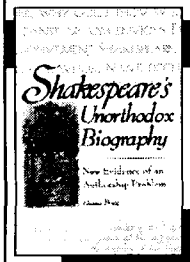

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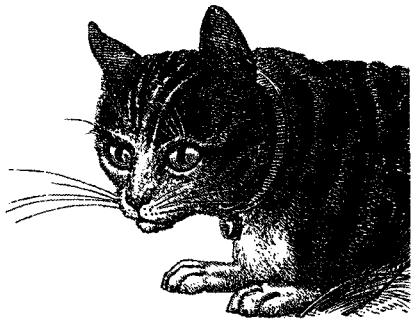

says Torrey of Gottesman's method. "I don't know of any other people outside of psychiatry who use the probandwise concordance rate." Paul Ewald agrees. In an e-mail, he notes that "proband concordance is vulnerable to overestimates on the basis of selection biases.... I trust Torrey's figures for schizophrenia," he writes. "They don't incorporate this bias."

Nonetheless, Gottesman is certain that genes play a bigger role than Torrey and his colleagues admit. In fact, Gottesman has helped formulate a multiple-gene theory of schizophrenia, which holds that the disorder arises from a complex set of interactions between many different genes. He's also interested in what he calls epigenetics, the study of environmental factors—drugs and other toxins, for example—that control or trigger gene events.

"Viruses could be epigenetic contributors, too," concedes Gottesman. But he will accompany Torrey only so far down that road. Back in 1994, when Gottesman and Torrey published the findings of a landmark study of twins and schizophrenia, they offered their differing interpretations of the results not as a traditional conclusion but in the form of a fictional conversation among three experts. Gottesman, who spoke for the geneticists under the pseudonym Dr. Mendel M. Malgene, urged Torrey, who assumed the nom de plume Dr. Dena S. Daverus, not to dismiss or diminish the complex interplay of different genes. He also pointed out that the brain scans they had conducted in the course of their study revealed broad, scattered types of changes in the structure of schizophrenic brains. Infectious diseases like rabies or polio, by contrast, afflict very specific types of cells or regions of the brain. And anyhow, says Gottesman today, "If schizophrenia is caused by an infectious disease, why is it that psychiatric nurses and psychiatrists don't have higher rates?" He pauses. "Why don't spouses of schizophrenics have higher rates of the disease?"

JOINING Dr. Daverus and Dr. Malgene in the fictional schizophrenia debate was Dr. A. Dominic D'Velupmoni, modeled after Daniel Weinberger, who in real life represents what has since become the dominant school of thought about the disease. Weinberger, who is chief of the Clinical Brain Disorders Branch Intramural Research Program at the National Institute of Mental Health, is one of the most articulate spokesmen for what is known as the

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neurodevelopmental hypothesis. Writes Weinberger, "It has recently become *de rigueur* to refer to schizophrenia as a neurodevelopmental disorder in which the primary cerebral insult or pathological process occurs during brain development long before the illness is clinically manifest." In other words, as Weinberger explains it to me, something "disrupts the normal programs of brain development." That could be a faulty gene or an obstetric complication. Or something else: Like Gottesman, Weinberger is willing to consider that viruses might play a role. "Genetics can't explain it all," he says. "There have to be environmental factors, too, and viruses may be one of those." But though he describes Torrey's viral theory as "very provocative, very interesting," Weinberger argues that "it's been supported by very little credible scientific data."

The neurodevelopmental theory "is not a theory about a specific cause; it's a theory about timing," counters Torrey. "We have fashions in schizophrenia research, and the neurodevelopmental theory is very *fashionable* right now." As he sees it, Weinberger needs to explain what exactly causes the schizophrenic brain to develop in the way it does. Attributing some of that process to obstetric complications or malnutrition during pregnancy, as some proponents of the neurodevelopmental hypothesis do, doesn't add up. Areas of the world that have the worst prenatal care, diet, and rates of obstetric complications do not have higher rates of schizophrenia; if anything, Torrey points out, the incidence of schizophrenia may be *lower* in such places.

Neurodevelopmental thinking nonetheless remains at the center of current psychiatric accounts of schizophrenia. And though Torrey and Yolken's views currently sit on the margins, Ewald does not think they will remain there. "Infectious causation has been seriously underestimated from the 1800s onward," he notes. "Many people who suggested infectious causes of diseases were dismissed but later proven right." Take gastric ulcers. Only in the last decade did researchers prove that *Helicobacter pylori* bacteria, not stress and hot food, cause most ulcers—even though evidence for this had been accumulating for over a century. With a disease as complex and mysterious as schizophrenia, Ewald admonishes, researchers need to be careful not to reject infectious disease hypotheses out of hand.

To be sure, the field is less divided today than it was when Torrey began his training some thirty years ago. Almost everyone in psychiatry now accepts the biological model of mental illness. No surprise, then, that Torrey, Yolken, Gottesman, and Weinberger all admit that their theories may well be compatible. At the same time, none shows much willingness to dilute a life's worth of research with such compromise. "The best theory of all would be one that integrates all of them without preconceptions," says Gottesman. "But," he says sadly, "who's going to do that?"

Stephen Mihm is the producer of *The New York Times Magazine* on the Web and a doctoral candidate in history at New York University. He lives in New York City with his three cats, all of whom declined to be interviewed for this story.

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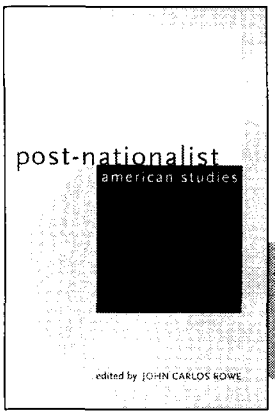

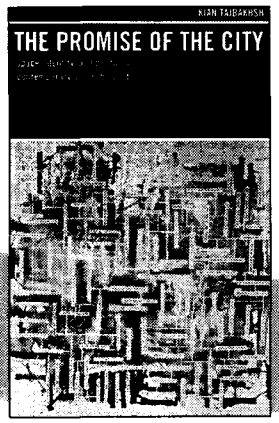

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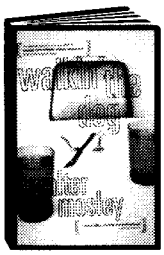

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THE QUEST FOR UNCERTAINTY

RICHARD RORTY'S PRAGMATIC PILGRIMAGE

BY **JAMES RYERSON**

THE TRANQUIL, HIBISCUS-LINED eucalyptus grove in the UC-Santa Cruz arboretum is a nice spot for reflecting on philosophy's age-old questions. Fortunately for Richard Rorty, a nature lover with a distaste for those sorts of questions, it's also an excellent place for bird-watching. We have driven here on a bright California morning to do a bit of both. As we pass his binoculars back and forth, searching the grevilleas for hummingbirds, it's hard to believe that this shy, gentle-mannered sixty-nine-year-old Stanford professor is the same man whose ideas have been widely denounced for the past twenty years as cynical, nihilistic, and deeply irresponsible.

"I have even lost a friend in all of this," says Rorty of his fractious career as America's most famous living philosopher. "It was Carl Hempel, one of the best-loved figures in the profession and a model of moral character." Hempel, a teacher of Rorty's, had fled Hitler's Germany and symbolized all that was most inspiring about the scientific, social democratic, truth-seeking world of Anglo-American philosophy. "Hempel read my book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* and wrote me a letter saying, in effect, 'You have betrayed everything I stood for.' And he really didn't like me after that. I'm still very sad about it."

Rorty points to a bird flying overhead. "That's a kestrel," he adds without a pause, in his doleful, sighing voice, "the smallest American falcon."

The charge of betrayal is one Rorty has learned to accept over the years. Like his idol John Dewey, whom he credits with breaking through "the crust of philosophical convention," he has pursued twin careers as disciplinary bad boy and high-minded public philosopher. He has set out to deflate the aspirations of his profession—he rejects the idea of truth as an accurate reflection of the world—while placing his own unorthodox philosophical views at the center of an ambitious vision of social and historical hope. In recent writings especially, he champions an unlikely brand of "postmodern bourgeois liberalism" that has largely infuriated postmodernists and liberals alike.

A lucid writer with a penchant for dropping the names of virtually all the major thinkers in the philosophical tradition, Rorty has a knack for making his radical rejection of truth and objectivity seem an easy and agreeable shift of one's current perspective. Harold Bloom is not alone in judging him "the most interesting philosopher in the world today." But the success of philosophy's preeminent anti-philosopher has not come easily. Seemingly everyone who is impressed with one facet of Rorty's work harbors severe reservations about another. Those who share his admiration for analytic philosophers like Donald Davidson, Wilfrid Sellars, and W.V.O. Quine are angered by his opinion that analytic philosophy does not exist "except in some such stylistic or sociological way." Political theorists are dismayed by his proposal that their work be replaced by "genres such as ethnography, the journalist's report, the comic book, the docudrama, and, especially, the novel." Fellow enthusiasts of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Jacques Derrida, and Martin Heidegger aren't comfortable seeing their favorite Continental thinkers discussed in the frank, Anglo-American idiom in which Rorty was trained. And radical postmodernist fans of his assault on the idea of objective truth are disappointed to hear that his politics are "pretty much those of Hubert Humphrey."

In practice, this assortment of provocations adds up to one of the truly original personalities in academic life. A heavy-moving man with a snowy drift of hair and dark, impish eyebrows, Rorty embodies a rare blend of intellectual traits. The University of Chicago philosopher James Conant notes that "in certain ways he resembles a Parisian intellectual: He reads everything, he drops a lot of names, he's interested in very big questions." But as Rorty plods along the arboretum's dirt paths in his frumpy, oversized sweater, with binoculars resting on his thickset torso, he looks every bit the stereotype of the sober, diligent Anglo-Saxon scholar. He manages to combine genuine personal modesty with sweeping philosophical ambition, and calls on clear prose and sensible-sounding argument to unite a range of wildly adventuresome ideas. The result is exceedingly unusual in a specialized academic world: a "syncretist hack," in his own self-effacing words, who in style as well as substance melds the most impressive elements of two intellectual traditions.

HEATHER CONLEY

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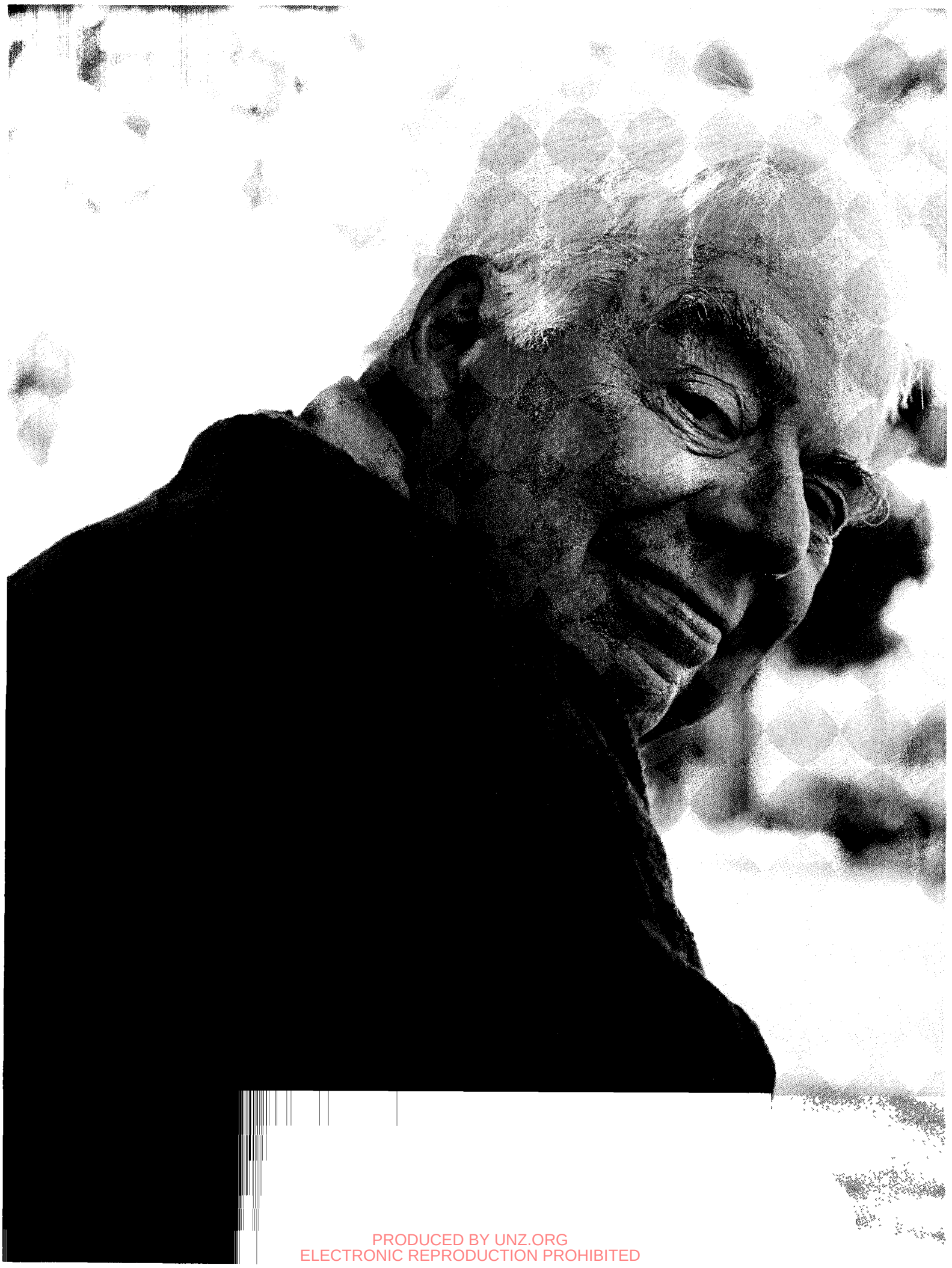

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But can the man who shattered philosophy's mirror of nature pick up the pieces? Over the past few years, Rorty has increasingly turned from the scholarly criticism of philosophy toward the public espousal of what he calls "social hope." In 1998 he left his longtime post at the University of Virginia and took a job at Stanford as professor of comparative literature—though he proposed the alternative title "transitory professor of trendy studies." That same year, he published a polemical work of intellectual history, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Harvard), in which he encouraged a revival of national pride among the American left and disparaged cynical "cultural leftists" who rely on theoretical approaches to politics at the expense of practical, piecemeal reform. A year later, Penguin published *Philosophy and Social Hope,* a paperback selection of Rorty's most accessible writings, marketably packaged with a cover image by the German film director Wim Wenders. Its title alludes to the Deweyan notion that in politics we should "substitute *hope* for the sort of knowledge which philosophers have usually tried to attain." By Rorty's lights, a "post-metaphysical culture," in which we forsake the rhetoric of the true nature of the world, will help promote a classless, casteless, and egalitarian society in the long run. "The inculcation of antilogocentrism in the young will contribute to the strength of democratic societies," he asserts.

Rorty's critics charge that his blithe disregard for the notion of objective truth threatens to undermine the public's moral and intellectual integrity. The conservative cultural critic Neal Kozody complains that "it is not enough for him that American students should be merely mindless; he would have them positively mobilized for mindlessness." Others see in Rorty a more promising example of intellectual conduct. In his 1987 book, *The Last Intellectuals,* Russell Jacoby bemoaned the disappearance of "public intellectuals." But in a new edition of his book, Jacoby refers to Rorty as an all-too-infrequent exception—a university scholar who "represents an effort to invigorate a public philosophy." The distinguished UC-Berkeley intellectual historian David Hollinger concurs: "Being a public intellectual is an easy thing to do badly, and Dick is one of the few people who can carry it off with integrity."

Yet no matter how attractive it might sound, Rorty's message of hope will not hold up if his attack on the last two thousand years of philosophy as misguided and socially useless fails to persuade. In the recently published *Rorty and His Critics* (Blackwell), Rorty goes head-to-head on this very matter with twelve of his most distinguished critics, including Jürgen Habermas, Donald Davidson, Hilary Putnam, Daniel Dennett, and Jacques Bouveresse. Despite Rorty's general disdain for the profession's ideals, the book suggests that his work has had a real impact on some important younger guns of the mainstream philosophical establishment. Still, the consensus among these friendly adversaries is that Rorty has gone too far with interesting ideas. "My own experience suggests that you can use Rorty as a great source on difficult thinkers like Heidegger or Sellars," says Dennett. "And if you multiply what he says by the number .673"—which Dennett playfully calls the "Rorty Factor"—"then you get the truth. Dick always exaggerates everything in the direction of the more radical."

Stauncher critics maintain that the Rorty Factor is considerably smaller. As the New York University philosopher Paul Boghossian remarks, Rorty faces the perilous task of rejecting the notion of objective truth while avoiding the charge that his own views are thus untrustworthy. "I just think he has never really pulled off the trick," Boghossian says. "I don't think that anybody has, but in particular I don't think that *he* has."

AS A YOUNGSTER, Rorty showed few signs of being an intellectual agitator in the making. "My parents were always telling me that it was about time I had a stage of adolescent revolt," he remembers. "They were worried I wasn't rebellious enough." James and Winifred Rorty set the bar high in that regard. Both were active members of New York City's anti-Stalinist, Trotskyite left—they had broken with the American Communist Party in 1932, a year after Richard was born. For years, James Rorty worked with the philosopher Sidney Hook on leftist causes like the anticapitalist, revolutionary American Workers Party; he later joined Hook in moving away from radicalism altogether. Winifred Rorty was the daughter of Walter Rauschenbusch, the legendary Social Gospel theologian, whom young Richard was raised to think of as "a sort of socialist hero." The Rortys typically spent half the year in rural Connecticut or New Jersey and the other half in Park Slope, Brooklyn, or the Chelsea Hotel in Manhattan. Surrounded by luminaries like A. Philip Randolph, Norman Thomas, Irving Howe, and Lionel and Diana Trilling, they epitomized the intellectually cosmopolitan lifestyle of the time, as depicted in books like Edmund Wilson's *Memoirs of Hecate County.*

JOHN DEWEY

Dragged in and out of various schools—and bullied at many of them—the timid, bookish Rorty was the sort of boy who sent opals as a gift to the Dalai Lama ("a fellow eight-year-old who had made good"), hunted in the mountains of northwest New Jersey for wild orchids, and worried that his love for those plants was incompatible with the Marxist criticism he had read of Walter Pater's aestheticism. At fifteen, he went off to the University of Chicago to get his bachelor's degree at the so-called Hutchins College, which permitted precocious students to enter in the middle of high school. There he studied a classical curriculum under scholars like

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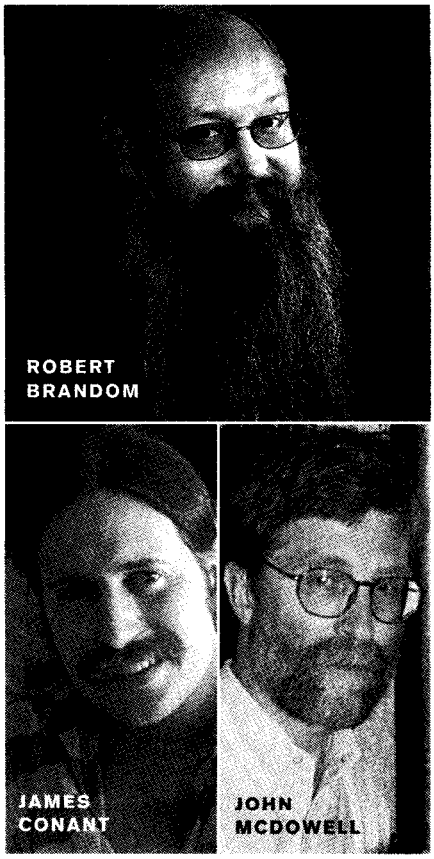
Leo Strauss and Richard McKeon and alongside students like the future classicist and cultural scourge Allan Bloom.

Rorty decided to stay on at Chicago for a master's degree in philosophy, which was tantamount to a career choice. James Rorty was "rather surprised and dismayed" by the idea and asked his friend Hook to give his son advice. ("He wasn't encouraging," says Rorty of Hook. "He just said things like 'publish early and often.'") In 1952, Rorty moved to Yale for his Ph.D., and by 1956 he had quickly finished a dissertation on the concept of potentiality—too quickly perhaps. "I was drafted into the army because I stupidly didn't delay my dissertation until past my twenty-sixth birthday," he explains. "I have no idea why I was that dumb." After a two-year military stint in which he worked in the computer section of the Signal Corps (he was awarded a programming medal for persuading his higher-ups to adopt the more efficient Polish system of logical notation), Rorty taught at Wellesley College for three years and then in 1961 landed a job at Princeton, which had one of the most distinguished philosophy programs in the country.



At Princeton, the search for the foundations of knowledge was conducted in the forbidding and highly technical terms of analytic philosophy. By rigorously analyzing the meanings of words and the objects they refer to, Rorty's new colleagues hoped to reveal the structure and accuracy of our statements about the world. "My first years at Princeton I was desperately trying to learn what was going on in analytic philosophy," he confesses. "Most of my colleagues had been at Harvard, and you had to know what they were talking about at Harvard in order to be with it."

After about two years of fumbling about, Rorty got into the swing of the analytic approach and began to make a name for himself with innovative work in the philosophy of mind. He was especially intrigued by the ideas of Sellars, Quine, and, later, Davidson. These were thinkers inclined to tackle problems by tearing down chunks of philosophy that they felt were misconceived and focusing their attention on what remained. Rorty's predicament was that his favorite thinkers were often tearing down different aspects of philosophy. While Sellars questioned whether our sense perceptions really afforded a privileged form of knowledge, Quine wondered whether logical truths could be distinguished from empirical findings. Over a number of years, Rorty began to stitch together these various innovative projects in a creative way, for he was able to see more commonality than difference in them. The only problem was that if neither sense perception nor logic offered us the prospect of utter certainty, then how could we determine the accuracy of our claims in representing the world?

By the early 1970s, Rorty had taken an even bolder turn: In part through his growing interest in the work of Derrida ("the cleverest man I'd read in years"), he was led to reread the work of Derrida's hero Heidegger. Reading Heidegger drew Rorty into the so-called hermeneutic tradition of Continental thought, which eschewed the project of breaking down language into its component parts in favor of an approach to knowledge more akin to literary interpretation than to scientific analysis. With a leg in both the analytic and Continental traditions, Rorty was positioned to see similarities among Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Dewey, three very different philosophers who nonetheless all asked what he called a "therapeutic" philosophical question: How can we avoid, rather than solve, the philosophical problems that bedevil us?

Rorty explored these highly controversial ideas in his 1979 classic, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* in which he argued that there was no sense in trying to give a general account of truth. "Granted that 'true' is an absolute term," he wrote in a later essay, "its conditions of application will always be relative." That is, whatever we may hope to mean when we call a belief "true," we use the word only when we feel our belief is justified—and justification always raises the question, "Justified to whom?" To critics who would argue that the *justification* of our claims may always be relative to a particular audience but that *truth* is not, because it consists of accuracy to the way the world really is, Rorty had a frustratingly simple response: There's no point in saying that truth has anything to do with the way the world really is.

In the spirit of the earlier pragmatist tradition, Rorty argued that the notions of "truth" and "accurate representation" are nothing but compliments we pay to sentences that we find useful in dealing with the world. To say that science is useful in predicting and controlling nature because it describes the true nature of the world is, in Rorty's view, a tautology, for we have no criteria for whether we have described "the true nature of the world" other than success in predicting and controlling nature.

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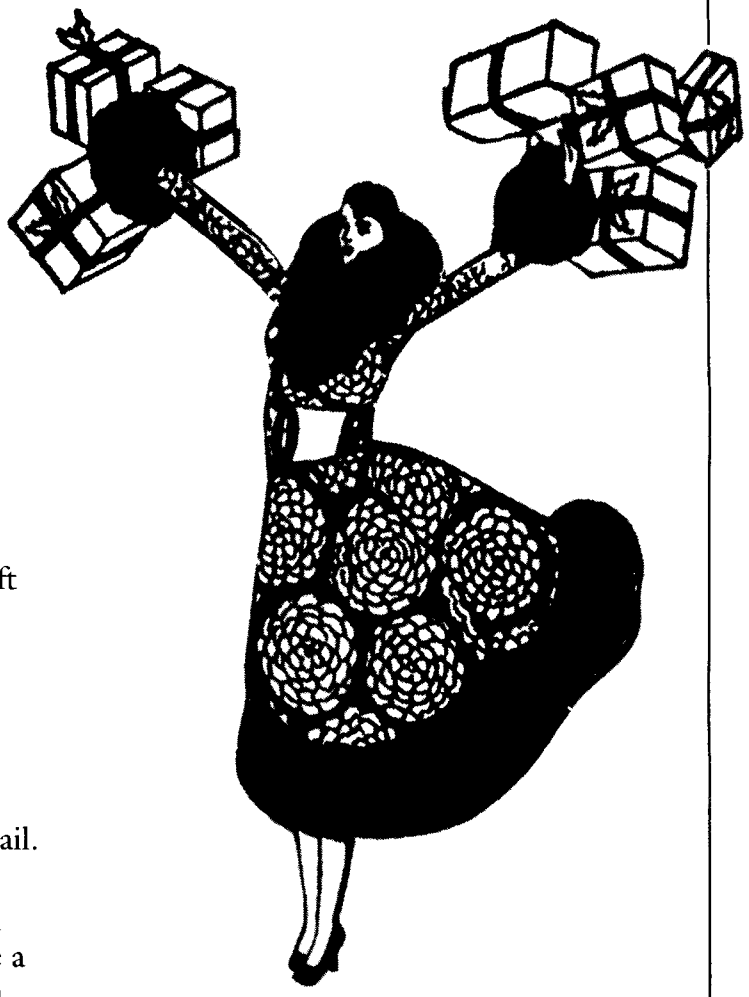

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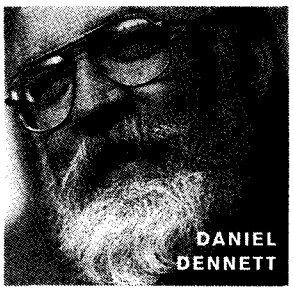
And once we see that science is deemed successful only when it helps us achieve certain goals, he explained, we will realize that other forms of inquiry can be considered equally successful at achieving different goals—without ever having to ask whether one form of inquiry better describes the way the world really is.

As for the charge that he was ignoring the fact that there is a world beyond the confines of our thought, Rorty conceded that the world does shove us around. "Yet," he asked, "what does being shoved around have to do" with making claims about the world, which we always do in the terms of our language? Any attempt to square linguistic statements with the world is to compare apples and oranges, to try to climb out of our own minds and language to see the world as it is in itself, and Rorty saw no profit in it. Indeed, following his own pragmatist criteria, he did not suggest that he was offering an alternative view of the world; rather, he proposed that his way of talking about things was useful. Instead of spending valuable time asking whether various types of inquiry—science, political thought, poetry, alchemy—are better or worse at capturing the truth, we should ask whether there are new ways of describing and redescribing the world that better serve our variety of goals, with the understanding that "hope of agreement is never lost so long as the conversation lasts."

Rorty's colleagues were not pleased, though they were hardly surprised. "My recollection is that for the first ten years at Princeton, I was one of the boys," remembers Rorty. "But for the second ten years, I was seen as increasingly contrarian or difficult." In addition to philosophical differences, there were personal complications: "I got divorced and remarried, and because my first wife was a philosopher and a friend of my colleagues', there were problems. It was not a friendly divorce, and I didn't handle it very well."

Rorty made it known that he was interested in a job elsewhere, preferably a university professorship, so he could avoid the issue of how he was supposed to fit in with a philosophy department. In the early 1980s, as *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* began to make waves throughout the academy, the University of Virginia made him the offer he wanted. "After years of thinking that what my colleagues were doing must be important," he recalls, "I began to think, maybe the analytic establishment is not the future of philosophy. Maybe it's just a bubble."

FOR ALL ITS audacity, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* couldn't have appeared at a more opportune moment, and its ideas couldn't have been espoused by a better-situated academic. At the time it was published, legions of scholars in the humanities were inspecting the discourses of the past and seeking a theoretical warrant for assessing those discourses in ways—historical, sociological, and political—that didn't presuppose a timeless, universal notion of truth. "If you wanted nonfoundational-sounding stuff," Rorty concedes, "mine was as good as any."


DANIEL DENNETT

Rorty's critics were quick to find something suspicious in his popularity with nonphilosophers. "One of the central morals of the book," says Paul Boghossian, who studied with Rorty at Princeton, "is that whatever there is that's still worth doing in philosophy is best done by literary critics rather than philosophers. This had tremendous, obvious appeal to those academics in the humanities who were already abandoning the study of literature narrowly conceived for much more general reflections on the relations between language, knowledge, truth, power, and society. Unfortunately, I don't think it's really possible to do good philosophy without a considerable amount of training in the subject."

Even some of Rorty's supporters have significant reservations about his views. The philosopher Daniel Dennett, who feels that Rorty's philosophy of mind is "just about perfect," nonetheless has qualms about Rorty's unwillingness to consider science a privileged form of inquiry and about his willingness to take seriously the philosophical views of thinkers like Derrida and Michel Foucault: "Dick Rorty has failed to discourage a lot of nonsense that I wish he had discouraged. It's an obligation of us in the field to grit our teeth and discourage the people who do the things that give philosophy a bad name. I don't think he does that enough."

Critics are also quick to pounce on some of Rorty's telltale stylistic quirks. Rorty's writings are littered with philosophical lists; for instance, many sentences will begin with a clause like "What Heidegger, Dewey, Cavell, Gadamer, Kuhn, Derrida, and Putnam are all saying is..." It's a technique that may allow nonphilosophers to feel they have a handle on an extraordinarily diverse range of thinkers, but to most philosophers the implied comparisons sound forced, if not downright inaccurate. "Almost everybody I know who figures in one of these lists invariably wants to get off," notes Conant, "even though it's extremely flattering to appear on these lists, and Rorty has made some people quite famous."

Rorty sympathizes with those—like Thomas Kuhn, to take a prominent example—who have pleaded with him not to characterize their work in ways they find distorting or misleading. "It's a natural reaction," he says. "They think of themselves as having made a quite specific point, and with a wave of my hand I seem to subsume their specific point as part of some great cultural movement, or something like that. They think that it's a way of putting them in bad company and ignoring the really interesting thing they said, which my net is too gross to capture." Still, Rorty defends this tendency: "I don't see anything wrong with doing that. Regardless of how they feel about it, if you think there's a common denominator or a trend, then why not say so?"

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EXPELLED FROM the mainstream philosophical community, Rorty took up ranks with those outside the discipline who had embraced his work. Given the widespread interest in Continental philosophy, the University of Virginia needed more professors to teach the material. So, Rorty explains, "I just picked up the slack." Teaching literature students was a relatively painless transition for him. "Princeton's got the best philosophy students in the country, so I missed that. I had to teach in a way that didn't allude to Quine's criticism of the analytic-synthetic distinction," he muses. "But it didn't matter much. By that time, I wasn't teaching in a way that required students to keep up with philosophical journals."

His scholarly interests, too, grew increasingly alien to the work done in academic journals. Though he continued to publish in those journals, picking "the same highly professionalized nits" that he picked in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* Rorty moved on to themes of more general concern, such as how to think about morality, liberal democracy, and a private self in a world without the possibility of objective truth. He addressed these issues in his 1989 book, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity.*

In his adolescence, Rorty had admired William Butler Yeats's ideal of holding "reality and justice in a single vision." Indeed, the desire for an all-encompassing perspective on the world had driven his intellectual curiosity. "I desperately wanted to be a Platonist," he admits, "to become one with the One, to fuse myself with Christ or God or the Platonic form of the Good or something like that." In *Contingency,* Rorty rebuked that objective. Morality, he felt, was not the voice of some inner part of ourselves that we needed philosophical reflection to discover; rather, it was simply the practical effort to work with other members of a community to find some mutually acceptable code of self-protection. Art, by contrast, involved the individual's efforts at "self-creation."

As for the liberal tradition of political thought, Rorty agreed with "ironists" like Foucault that liberalism's supposedly timeless balance of rights and duties is a mere historical contingency; at the same time, he agreed with "liberals" like Habermas that liberal democracies are worth fighting passionately for. The absence of any universally valid notions of human rights or individual liberties was no reason to find fault with the well-functioning institution of liberal democracy itself. The sole factor responsible for keeping liberal democracy alive, Rorty argued, was the hatred of cruelty and a solidarity with those who suffer. He offered books like George Orwell's *1984* as examples of how writers can redescribe the world in ways that cultivate this sort of solidarity. When faced with opponents who don't share our worldview, Rorty explained, we cannot hope to refute them, but we can concretely elucidate our worldview in the hope that it will make their worldview look untenable. "There is no answer to a redescription," he pronounced, "save a re-re-redescription."

Alongside this talk of incremental redescription, one could detect signs of a grander vision. At stake was nothing less than the progression of Western culture into its next stage of maturity. The first stage of this maturation, in Rorty's eyes, was overcoming the pre-Enlightenment religious outlook, which required humans to appeal to something nonhuman and divine for moral guidance and truth when in fact they should have been seeking moral guidance among themselves. Many thinkers acknowledge the freedom that this aspect of the Enlightenment has brought. But Rorty regrets that few of them see a parallel between overcoming the dubious religious idea of a nonhuman divine Other and overcoming the dubious scientific idea of conforming our inquiry to the way the world really is.

Such metaphysical pretensions, Rorty believes, are the traces of unprofitable ways of talking about the world, and if philosophers can persuade people to stop talking as though our worldview describes things as they really are, they can make a substantive contribution to the de-divinizing of the world. Rather than assuming that our inquiry can cease when it hits the hard bedrock of truth, Rorty wants people to realize that the goals of inquiry continually evolve and are best met by an enduring commitment to experimentation, novelty, poetic creativity, and pluralism.

So are philosophers useless, or do they have a world-historical role to play in dispelling deep metaphysical superstitions? Rorty acknowledges this tension: "You're right. I wobble on that point." But he draws a distinction between the day-to-day irrelevance of worrying about truth and the epochal significance of learning to talk in ways that sidestep the ideal of certain knowledge. "Just because world-historical movements are happening doesn't mean you can apply that knowledge in everyday practice."

AS RORTY TURNED toward political and cultural questions, he had less and less patience with his postmodernist colleagues in the humanities. In particular, he disliked their politics. "I was surrounded by what seemed to me an idiot Left in the literature departments," he explains, "people who claimed to be politically involved but who, as far as I could see, weren't." In *Achieving Our Country,* Rorty responded by excoriating what he described as a "spectatorial, disgusted, mocking Left." He laid the charges of complacency and political impotence on academics who had permitted "cultural politics to supplant real politics." He lamented the disappearance of the "reformist left," Americans such as Eugene Debs and Franklin Roosevelt who "between 1900 and 1964, struggled within the framework of constitutional democracy to protect the weak from the strong."

In *Rorty and His Critics,* Rorty comes as close as he ever has to an apology for throwing his philosophical weight behind literary scholars who used his work for suspect political ends. When he arrived at UVA to teach Continental philosophy, Rorty confesses, he "did not foresee what has actually happened: that the popularity of

RORTY LAMENTS THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE "REFORMIST LEFT" HE ASSOCIATES WITH EUGENE DEBS AND FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT.

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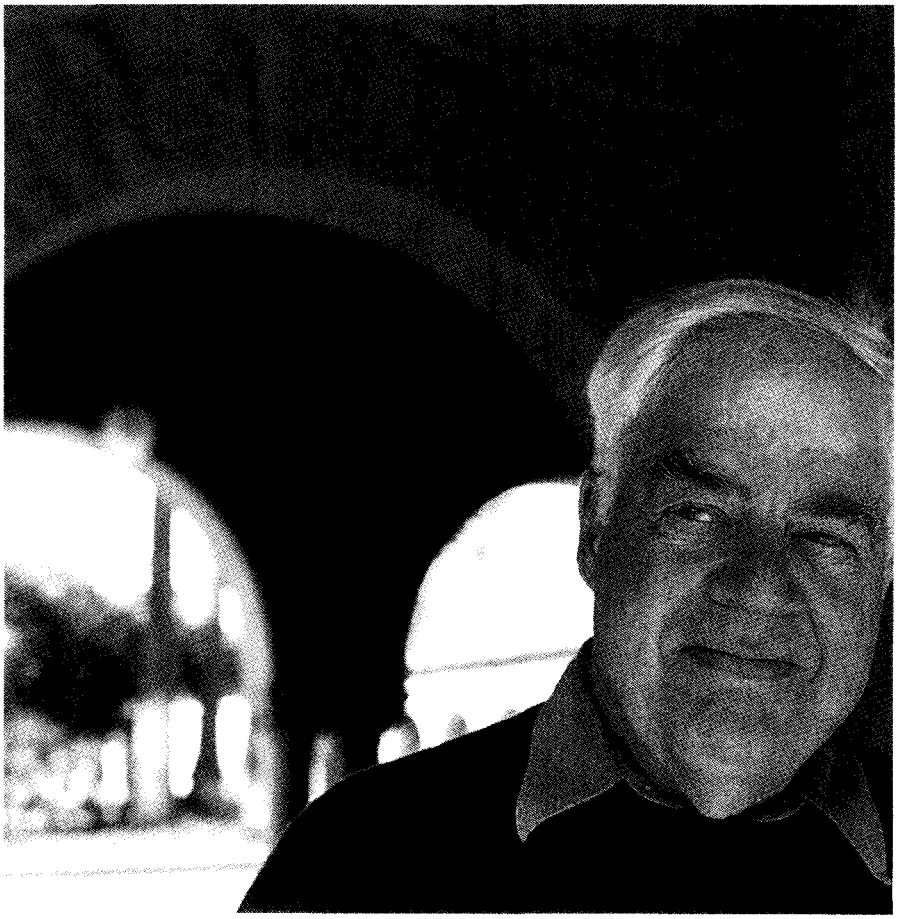
philosophy (under the sobriquet 'theory') in our literature departments was merely a transitional stage on the way to the development of what we in America are coming to call the Academic Left." These leftists, Rorty asserts, "have convinced themselves that by chanting various Derridean or Foucauldian slogans they are fighting for human freedom.... The political uselessness, relative illiteracy, and tiresomely self-congratulatory enthusiasm of this new Academic Left, together with its continual invocation of the names of Derrida and Foucault, have conspired to give these latter thinkers a bad name in the United States." He concludes: "I am, I must admit, chastened. But I am not ashamed.... There are other things to do with Foucault and Derrida than are currently being done with them by the School of Resentment, just as there are other things to be done with Nietzsche than to use him as the Nazis used him."

But has Rorty articulated a politics any more practical than that of the academic left he disdains? Though he has made specific proposals in *The Nation* in favor of campaign finance reform, universal health care, and the more equitable financing of primary and secondary education, many critics find his views too much those of a relatively uninformed outsider. At a City University of New York lecture on public intellectuals in May, the judge and libertarian economist Richard Posner attacked Rorty's conception of politics for its indifference to the workings of actual economic or socio-economic policy. Rorty's political outlook, Posner charged, is "unworldly," "pessimistic," and "almost Spenglerian," with a whiff of "nostalgia for the militancy and class struggle of the old labor movement."

Meanwhile, leftists like the New School political philosopher Richard Bernstein have attacked Rorty for his complacent disregard of the more sinister overtones of his pro-American stance, calling his views on politics "little more than an ideological *apologia* for an old-fashioned version of Cold War liberalism dressed up in fashionable 'post-modern' discourse." Even the economist Robert Kuttner, a figure whom one might expect to be more sympathetic to Rorty's strain of redistributionist-minded liberalism, has attacked Rorty's call for eliminating Social Security benefits for the wealthier elderly. In *The American Prospect,* Kuttner called Rorty's *New York Times* Op-Ed piece in March on this topic "so politically innocent and self-defeating that one didn't know whether to laugh or to cry." Kuttner explains his irritation: "I was annoyed at the Social Security Op-Ed because I thought, and still think, that Rorty simply missed the logic of social solidarity: the greater security and equality for have-nots that is inherent in universal social programs. And this from a professed egalitarian."

IF RORTY has met with mixed reactions in the public realm, he has, ironically, enjoyed a small revival in the philosophical world he left behind. Several of the most highly respected thinkers within contemporary Anglo-American philosophy—John McDowell, James Conant, and Rorty's former student Robert Brandom—have expressed their intellectual debt to Rorty. In the preface to his seminal 1994 book, *Mind and World,* McDowell acknowledged that he sketched out his initial ideas "during the winter of 1985–6, in an attempt to get under control my usual excited reaction to a reading—my third or fourth—of Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature.*" He added that it should be "obvious that Rorty's work is in any case central for the way I define my stance here."

As McDowell explains in his essay "Towards Rehabilitating Objectivity" in *Rorty and His Critics,* Rorty's greatest accomplishment has been to help us escape from the idea that we need philosophy to bridge the supposed gap between our knowledge and the world. ("It was largely from him," McDowell says, "that I learned to think like that.") But McDowell feels "a piece of mere sanity" is missing from Rorty's account. Like Rorty, McDowell emphasizes that we cannot get outside our particular perspectives or worldviews. But unlike Rorty, he does not conclude that this means we must give up our notions of truth and objectivity altogether. To preserve a distinction between a truth that consists of consensus and a truth that consists in getting things objectively right, McDowell argues, "is not to try to think from outside our practices; it is simply to take it seriously that we can really mean what we say from within those practices." Indeed, he asks, what would it mean to



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have a *worldview* if, à la Rorty, we avoid the idea that our statements are true in light of the way the *world* is in our *view* of it?

In an exceedingly rare statement of self-doubt, Rorty replies: "Sometimes McDowell almost persuades me that I should back off from my highly unpopular attempt to replace objectivity with solidarity.... Sometimes I think that I really must have the blind spot he diagnoses." But in the end, though he finds "about 90 percent of *Mind and World* very appealing indeed," Rorty cannot figure out why McDowell refers to consensus as "mere consensus." If one norm of inquiry, consensus, can fully capture the sense in which our knowledge is in touch with the world, then why does McDowell insist on the need to add a second, perhaps more commonsensical but metaphysically heavier, norm of inquiry—that of getting things right about the world? "Here again," says Rorty, "the question is whether we have a difference [between choosing one norm of inquiry or two] that could ever make a difference."

James Conant believes he can show Rorty the difference. In his essay in *Rorty and His Critics,* "Freedom, Cruelty, and Truth: Rorty Versus Orwell," Conant claims to demonstrate that Rorty's pragmatism cannot satisfy its own requirement of being useful—which, after all, is the only reason that Rorty adheres to it. In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity,* Rorty championed Orwell's *1984* as a model of how literature can create greater awareness of suffering. But Conant worries that Rorty himself offers the individual no resources with which to condemn a world of Orwellian thought control. In the totalitarian scenario of *1984,* the protagonist, Winston Smith, remembers having seen airplanes in his childhood, before the Party took power. And yet, since the Party took power, everyone but Winston has been brainwashed into believing that the Party invented the airplane. When Winston says, "the Party did not invent the airplane," by Rorty's standards he does not make a knowledgeable statement, because he cannot bring about the consensus of his peers. Isn't this a case where McDowell would be right in suggesting that an appeal to a second, nonconsensus norm of inquiry makes a difference? "If Winston tries to do everything that Rorty thinks he can do," explains Conant, "then he'll quickly come to the conclusion: 'The Party invented the airplane.' But if he tries to do something that is left out of Rorty's theory of justification, which is to try to get it right, trusting his memories and so on, then he has reason to think that the Party didn't invent the airplane."

Rorty's response to Conant is straightforward and bleak: "The difference between myself and Conant is that he thinks that someone like Winston, trapped in such a society, can turn to the light of the facts. I think that there is nowhere for Winston to turn." For Rorty, the way to prevent a situation like this from coming about in the first place is not to reclaim the notion of objective truth, but rather to promote what he calls "truthfulness"—namely, the freedom to say publicly what you believe, even when it is disadvantageous to do so. If we take care of making sure people can say what they believe, he argues, "truth" will take care of itself.

For Conant, though, it is unclear if Rorty can speak of truthfulness without having a notion of objective truth. Indeed, he points out that in *1984,* part of the horror is that Winston's fellow citizens have been encouraged to cultivate a high degree of "doublethink"—that is, to believe they speak the truth even though they are not saying anything that is true. Conant believes that such doublethink satisfies—indeed, perversely resembles—Rorty's prescription of "truthfulness."

"Rorty's quite right that consensus is a necessary condition of justification," Conant says. But Conant feels there's room to balance that insight with the idea of truth as getting things right—all without succumbing to the traditional philosophical idea that getting things right involves capturing the world as it is apart from our view of it. "It's an overly restricted set of options that causes Rorty all his trouble," Conant concludes. "The right things to say in philosophy are much more delicate than that."

WHY IS Rorty—the advocate of pluralism, of not knowing things for sure, of openness and variety—not more comfortable with the balancing act that philosophers like McDowell and Conant want to pull off? For all the important mysteries about Rorty, his colleagues call attention to one seemingly insignificant aspect of

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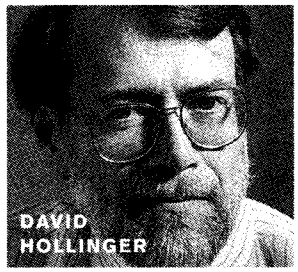
DICK REALLY DOES SEE HIMSELF IN WORLD-HISTORICAL TERMS AND HE CAN DO THIS WITHOUT BEING PRETENTIOUS ABOUT IT," SAYS HOLLINGER.



his personality: his voice. Rorty's voice is, as Daniel Dennett notes, "sort of striking—these firebrand views delivered in the manner of Eeyore." When philosophers talk about Rorty, few can resist trying to imitate his distinctively somber delivery. Of Rorty's mode of presentation, the British philosopher Jonathan Rée says: "There's a tremendous kind of melancholy about it. He tries to be a gay Nietzschean, but it's an effort for him." For Conant, hearing Rorty speak for the first time was something of a revelation. "It's easy to read his writings in a register of excitement and a heightened, breathless voice," he explains. "But the note that I heard when he was reading these sentences in his own cadences and rhythm was—for want of a better word—depression. I thought, this is the voice of a man who feels as if he's been let down or betrayed by philosophy." Jürgen Habermas concurs that Rorty's anti-philosophy "seems to spring from the melancholy of a disappointed metaphysician." And for Conant, this melancholy goes far in explaining the intransigence with which Rorty holds to his pluralistic philosophy of dialogue and playfulness. "It's as though he's been let down by philosophy once, and he's not going to let it happen again," Conant says.

BUT HOW ARE WE to square this vision of philosophical depression with the explicit role that hope plays in Rorty's philosophy? For David Hollinger, Rorty's somber intellectual mood is not one of depression, but rather one of hope wisely tempered by experience. "I think Dick is rightly concerned about the legacy of naive optimism that Dewey is constantly being assaulted for," he says. "There's this idea that the children of the Enlightenment were smug and Panglossian; they felt they had renounced God and could go forth on a Promethean basis. In contrast to this, Rorty injects a sober realism about the evils of the world: Do you know about the Holocaust? Do you know about the atomic bomb? There is a feeling in Dick that this Enlightenment inheritance is basically right, if only we could be a little bit more chastened about it. Dick really does see himself in world-historical terms. And he is one of the few people who can do this without being pretentious about it."

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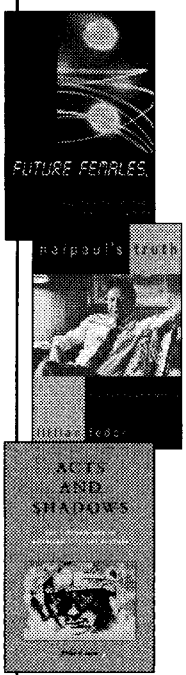

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Conant, though, insists that there remains a strong tension between Rorty's disenchanted philosophical views and the place that hope has in his public philosophy of late. "Part of the reason that the concept of hope plays such a central role," he says, "is that he's trying to give us hope without giving us a great many of the things that used to allow for the possibility of hope. So the concept of hope itself becomes important, and he wants to supply it, and so it has to go on the title page, because any of the things that might have brought us hope in their wake—truth, beauty, humanity—have been left out."

Rée, too, senses Rorty's apparent need to push forward with a positive vision and social message despite his disappointment with philosophy. "Rorty found his distinctive voice in the shock of a kind of bereavement," he says. "Long ago, truth must have been a god to him." But though Rée, as a Gadamer scholar, thinks Rorty's philosophical stance may be unimpeachable, he is not sure that humankind can master its own future the way Rorty seems to believe. "One possible picture of metaphysics," he explains, "is that it's rooted not in the studies we make as students but in the ways we try to make sense of ourselves starting from earliest infancy. Our notions may not withstand a Rortyan scrutiny—they may not be not justified in any way. But nevertheless they're not arbitrary. We've grown to be the people we are because of them. It's more than a matter of will that we came by them, and it's more than a matter of will to change them."

Has Rorty really rejected his onetime ideal of holding reality and justice in a single vision? Or is he merely passing it off in another guise? After all, though he encourages pluralism and not knowing, he puts forth a view that settles many questions, and settles them once and for all. He suggests that the single measure for assessing all vocabularies is whether they are useful. Has he, contrary to his own intentions, simply created another kind of metavocabulary—a general way of assessing all ways of talking?

Achieving the proper sort of uncertainty may be hard to do, but it is critical to Rorty. When reflecting on his early days at Princeton, he begrudges the intellectual climate there. "Analytic philosophy was correlated with intellectual talent," he remembers. "Exposing the hidden assumptions and unclear terms in arguments: That was the only skill that was valued." Rorty confesses that he wasn't "good at it, wasn't sharp enough." But he regrets the inability of his sharper colleagues to second-guess their teachers or their own most basic assumptions. For Rorty, the most pernicious idea in that intellectual atmosphere was that technical clarity in problem solving was the chief intellectual virtue. "That's a recipe for scholasticism if I've ever heard it," he says, shaking his head disapprovingly. "What about imaginative virtues? If you don't allow people to be unclear, intellectual progress grinds to a halt. It's the vague people who are the pioneers."

James Ryerson is associate editor of *LF*. His profile of Judge Richard Posner appeared in the May/June issue.

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The Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida, has been selected by the Rockefeller Foundation to host a three-year program of Residential Fellowships in the Humanities to encourage the study of religion, civil society, and globalization in Latin America and Latino communities in the United States. During the second year of the program (2001-2002), we will explore the theme "Religious Pluralism, Democratization, and Citizenship." We will examine the extent to which different religious traditions foster the exercise of democratic citizenship in both old and new democracies in the region, and contribute to the articulation of participatory forms of collective identity.The program is open primarily to junior scholars in the humanities and social sciences, and nonacademic practitioners and artists. We will also consider senior scholars who seek supplementary support from their host institutions or from other independent funding sources. In addition to a stipend and travel support, the Center will provide resident fellows with library privileges, office space, and computer facilities.
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THE LOST EMPERORS

JAPAN SCHOLARS STRUGGLE TO UNEARTH THE PAST

BY **ALISSA QUART**

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tomb in Nara, Japan, on October 7, 1998. It was a historic occasion: The tomb, believed to have been constructed in the fifth century, was being opened to scholars for the first time in nearly 140 years. According to Walter Edwards, an archaeologist at Tenri University who attended the opening, a government official requested that the scholars offer a prayer, and they did. Then they crossed a narrow moat and entered a thickly wooded area. After touring the site, the scholars examined pottery shards and fragments of roof tiles. Before long, they discerned that this supposed imperial tomb was not an ancient grave at all. Rather, it was a small fortress dating back to the late medieval period.

It was a shining moment for the archaeologists. Since 1960, if not before, scholars had harbored suspicions about the site's authenticity. But Anko's tomb, along with some 250 other historic graves, had remained closed to academics and researchers. Said to be the burial places of emperors and the imperial coterie from the Kofun Period (300–645 A.D.), all but a few of these tombs remain off limits today. They are strictly guarded by the Imperial Household Agency (IHA), a largely independent arm of the office of the prime

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minister responsible for managing the affairs of the imperial family. Only IHA employees, including archaeologists who work for the state, are permitted to enter the sites. And although the IHA regularly inspects the tombs, even the agency may not know what remains in any one sealed sarcophagus. Famous for its power, secrecy, and tight control, the IHA is so protective of the tombs that officials balk even at the use of nonintrusive research technologies such as radar and fiberscope.

The official grounds for this policy are religious. To dig up the mortuaries of Japan's forefathers would be an act of profanity, the IHA insists. "While I understand the desire to pursue scholarly research, tell me what delight is there in having [one's] ancestors' graves exposed?" the IHA's director once demanded at a government hearing on the subject. "As the agency charged with the care of the graves of the imperial house, we cannot relent on this issue no matter what pressure is brought to bear." Even if the tombs turn out to be empty or falsely identified, the IHA maintains, centuries of prayer at the sites have made them sacred: To excavate them would still be blasphemous.

Skeptical Japan scholars, however, suspect that something more than piety is at stake. After all, the Japanese government generally takes a serious interest in the country's early history, spending more than one billion dollars a year on digs. Why would the IHA let sites from a crucial epoch in Japan's ancient history languish unexplored? Indeed, surprisingly little is known about the Kofun period, although it saw the first full development of the early Japanese state. Few reliable written records exist from the era. The closed graves could contain important Kofun artifacts, some bearing actual names of great historic value. Specialists consider the forbidden tombs the choicest of Japan's thousands of grave sites.

So why the secrecy? Opening the forbidden tombs, some scholars hypothesize, could offend Japanese nationalists, particularly if such excavations reveal evidence that the imperial line of succession broke long ago. After all, most scholars suspect that several storied emperors never even existed. The graves could offer final empirical validation of that view.

Still other scholars believe the IHA's intransigence has more to do with the explosive question of Japanese ancestry. Given Japan's historic rivalry with Korea, a country it invaded more than once and against whose people a long-standing prejudice persists, there has been great resistance to the mounting evidence that the two populations intermixed in the ancient world. Could the IHA be trying to conceal the imperial family's Korean roots?

THE TWIN issues of Japanese nationalism and anti-Korean sentiment are particularly relevant today, given Japan's

EMPEROR HIROHITO

increasingly conservative political climate. The right-wing nationalist Shintaro Ishihara, recently elected governor of Tokyo, turned an annual earthquake drill in September into a mammoth military exercise with racist overtones: "Third-country nationals and foreigners who have entered Japan illegally have perpetrated heinous crimes," he told his troops, in unmistakable reference to Japan's Korean minority. Several months earlier, the country's new prime minister, Yoshiro Mori, speaking to an audience of Shintoists, had called his country "a divine nation with the emperor at its center." Opposition parties unsuccessfully demanded Mori's resignation, noting that Japanese nationalism and the notion of the emperor's divinity were partly to blame for the country's military barbarities in the 1930s and 1940s. But although Emperor Hirohito renounced the imperial divinity claim at the end of World War II, and Japan's current constitution avows that the state should refrain from religious education or any other form of religious activity, some citizens still believe that the imperial line is endowed with sacred power.

Perhaps this is why the forbidden tombs have become a flash point in an ongoing argument over Japan's identity. "The royal tombs are in a sense the symbol of conservative parties and of the Japanese government, which utilizes nationalists to attack left-wing movements," says Professor Izumi Niiro, editor of a journal published by the Society of Archaeological Studies in Okayama. In 1976, ten organizations, led by the Japanese Archaeological Association (JAA),formally requested admission to the tombs, to little effect. When Professor Hatsue Otsuka, then at Meiji University, published an article in 1978 calling for the opening of the tombs, he received death threats and was placed under police protection. Says Niiro, "I'm very happy if foreign societies and magazines criticize the IHA."

Historians and archaeologists have long challenged the notion of a divine, continuous imperial line. Although such discussions were largely silenced until 1945, two historical surveys, one published around 1960 and another in the early 1970s, convincingly argued that Japan's first nine emperors were in fact apocryphal. The main account of their reign presumes them to have ruled for impossibly long spells, and the chronology of their deeds is rife with inconsistencies. Some scholars speculate that these figures were not emperors but mere local chieftains in the Japanese region of Nara. Today the belief in an unbroken imperial line is more common than belief in the emperor's divinity, but nonetheless remains mostly the province of ultranationalists—and of the imperial family, which maintains that the current emperor, Akihito, is number 125 in an unbroken bloodline.

The imperial family's tacit fidelity to a history most experts now consider legend poses problems for academics. Professor Masaaki Okita, chief representative of the JAA and a professor of archaeology at Tenri University, for one, is particularly

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interested in inspecting the forbidden tomb supposedly belonging to Japan's first emperor, Jimmu, who until 1947 was officially depicted as a direct descendant of the sun goddess. Along with most archaeologists, Okita suspects that "Jimmu's tomb" is not a tomb at all. MIT's John Dower, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (Norton and The New Press, 1999), muses that opening the graves is "still a controversial subject, because it raises so many issues about the imperial line, as well as myths that people wish to perpetuate about the origins and early history of Japan."

IT IS ONE thing to imagine that Jimmu's tomb is empty. It is quite another to envision that it contains genetic proof that Japan's ancient emperors were actually Korean. But some scholars, not least Korean archaeologists, strongly suspect that if the tombs were to be opened, they would reveal a Korean imperial lineage that many Japanese wish to deny.

PORTRAITS AND CHINESE MIRROR FOUND IN THE TAKAMATSUZUKA CRYPT

The suggestion that the IHA would be motivated by an idealized, homogeneous notion of Japan's past, anti-Korean in character, is not entirely preposterous, given Japan's historically tense relationship with its northwestern neighbor. After invading Korea in the sixteenth century, Japanese fighters returned with the sliced off ears and noses of a hundred thousand Korean victims. They buried these spoils in a Kyoto hill. Today the site is a national landmark called the Ear Mound. As recently as the 1960s, it bore the legend, "One cannot say that cutting off ears or noses was so atrocious by the standards of the time." In 1910 Japan annexed Korea, citing Japan's ancient history of dominance as justification. The occupation continued until 1945.

Even after World War II, a troubled legacy continued to burden Japanese-Korean relations. Roughly a million colonial subjects remaining in Japan were stripped of their Japanese citizenship. Until just last year, some 600,000 Koreans residing in Japan were required to carry identification cards bearing their fingerprints at all times or pay costly fines. Although around 90 percent of these ethnic Koreans were born in Japan, and most speak Japanese as their first language, they remain resident aliens, referred to officially as South Korean or North Korean residents in Japan.

Given the geographic proximity of the two countries, not to mention the history of invasion and colonization, it is no surprise that genetic analysis has proven a long history of intermixing between the Japanese and Korean peoples. And yet such evidence is sometimes hard for portions of the Japanese public to swallow. In 1999, when the country's national broadcaster, NHK, aired a documentary about the latest DNA findings, hundreds of viewers called the station to protest.

In such a politically charged atmosphere, could the IHA fear that opening the graves would further inflame racial tensions? After all, whatever the genetic evidence for intermixing among the Japanese and Korean hoi polloi, Japan's highest nobility might still be presumed ethnically pure—unless the contents of the tombs suggest otherwise.

The tombs may well contain evidence of intermarriage between the elites of the Japanese archipelago and those of the Korea Peninsula, notes Gina Barnes, an archaeologist of ancient Japan at Britain's Durham University. During the Kofun period, Barnes speculates, marriage exchanges between the sovereigns of the early Japanese states of Yamato and Wa, and those of the early Korean states of Paekche, Silla, and Kaya, could have resembled the intermarriages between the royal families of European states like Britain and Germany. Barnes is not alone in considering such possibilities. Charles T. Keally, a professor of archaeology at Sophia University, Tokyo, remarks that many scholars have long believed that Japan's aristocratic Great Clans, into which other Japanese nobles often married, derived from Korean lineage; the notion even emerges in the eighth-century Japanese history *Nihon shoki*.

Intermarriage is but one means by which Koreans may have infiltrated the Japanese imperial family. Over the years, some scholars have entertained the idea of an early Korean invasion. Not long after World War II, the archaeologist Egami Namio argued that the early Japanese kingdom of Yamato was invaded by nomads who had ridden down from the Korea Peninsula around A.D. 300, founding the imperial line. Egami's horse-rider hypothesis, as it was called, drew heavily on the burial of Korean warrior goods in Japanese mortuaries dating from the middle Kofun period onward. The Columbia University scholar Gari Ledyard followed Egami's lead, arguing in 1975 that the Puyo tribe from Manchuria conquered the Korean state of Paekche before proceeding across the straits to found the Japanese state of Yamato. In the archeological sites from the early fifth century, "horses appear suddenly and forcibly before our eyes," Ledyard wrote, indicating an invasion from the mainland. Although the Puyo empire soon dissolved, Japan was its enduring remnant.

A year after Ledyard published his startling version of Egami's thesis, dozens of scholars from ten academic organizations

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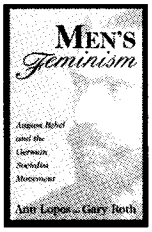

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began to request access to the tombs. But the horserider hypothesis had fallen into disfavor among archaeologists. The horse gear and related artifacts, the theory's opponents argued, were introduced gradually over a period of centuries. Such a pattern indicated not a sudden influx of conquerors so much as an evolution of agrarian Japan as it absorbed the influence of nearby Korea's equestrian high culture.

FEW archaeologists expect to find confirmation of the horserider hypothesis, but most scholars believe that the forbidden tombs do contain Korean artifacts. This suspicion, combined with the history of anti-Korean racism in Japan, has fueled much of the controversy surrounding the IHA. Back in 1972, archaeologists were able to excavate the formerly closed imperial tomb of Takamatsuzuka. The site yielded a stone burial crypt decorated with murals of Chinese deities, in the manner of tombs in Korea and China. The discovery was greeted not with fear but with newspaper columns calling for more such tombs to be opened. So why, many scholars wonder, does the IHA continue to hold out?

To some scholars, the fact that such excavations have been conducted at all proves that Japanese officials *can't* be conspiring to exclude Koreans from the imperial family tree. Tenri University's Walter Edwards, for one, suggests that the entire question of imperial ethnicity is a red herring. "I assure you that the Imperial Household does not engage in any debate about the origins of the Japanese people," says Edwards. "The suggestion that it does, and the intimation that restrictions on access to the imperial tombs are motivated by questions of ethnic origins, is a fabrication." The keyhole shape of the forbidden tombs, Edwards argues, is an entirely proto-Japanese architectural form characteristic of the Kofun period. Thus it is unlikely that these tombs were built to order by proto-Koreans who raced in on horseback. As for the Chinese and Korean artifacts that have been unearthed from the few opened tombs, Edwards and others believe that these finds illustrate little that wasn't already well known. No one disputes that Korea exerted considerable influence on Japan's cultural development through, for instance, technologies brought by its immigrants and tradesmen, among them Korean craftsmen employed by Japanese nobles. Is there really reason to presume such artifacts signify anything more?

Absolutely, say some Korea scholars. Hyung Il Pai, an archaeologist of Korea at the University of California at Santa Barbara, puts the matter simply: "The standard rhetoric in South Korea for the last forty years has been that the Japanese are reluctant to open the tombs in case they find more 'Korean' art and architecture, which will endanger the mythical or mystical origins of the Japanese imperial lineage." Wontack Hong, the author of *Paekche of Korea and the Origin of Yamato Japan,* believes that the Japanese simply don't want to face the possibility that the early Koreans of Paekche created the Japanese Yamato kingdom. And William Wayne Farris, a historian of ancient Japan at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, notes that the Kofun period's signature burial architecture has also been spotted in the region of Korea that would have housed the ancient kingdom of Kaya. The problem, writes Farris, is that "many Japanese are upset to think that the design of these tombs too could have come from Southern Korea."

WONTACK HONG bluntly terms his outlook "the Korean perspective," and indeed, the graves debate often seems to come down to scholars' political or national leanings. As Keiji Imamura, an archaeologist at the University of Tokyo, writes in *Prehistoric Japan,* many Japanese and Korean scholars have conflicting understandings of their countries' relationship during the Kofun period: Some Japanese believe that Japan frequently invaded Korea, whereas some Koreans argue that Korea ruled Japan.

There is a long history of nationalist archaeology in Japan and a shorter, more recent one in Korea. Before 1920, Japan scholars relied heavily—almost exclusively—on two major chronicles of the fourth and fifth centuries: the *Nihon shoki* and the *Kojiki,* both written in the eighth century. The accounts teem with humiliating passages about the quelling of the Paekche people. Historians by and large believed these stories of Yamato and Wa invading Paekche and establishing domination, despite artifacts that point to the possibility of a Korean victory over Japan. "They were reflecting back after they had suffered several defeats in Korea, so they developed a story that was more ideology

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DID JAPAN CONQUER KOREA DURING THE KOFUN PERIOD—OR DID KOREANS INVADE AND RULE JAPAN?

than truth," says Farris. "The early histories are completely doctored."

Today, scholars widely acknowledge Korea's influence on Japan during that time. Many contemporary histories report that early Koreans imported farming techniques, as well as bookkeeping, stonemasonry, surnames, scissors, ovens, writing styles, ditch digging, kilns, silk weaving, tax collecting, and Buddhism, into Japan. But how, exactly, was this influence transmitted? Even if the tombs are opened, yielding important artifacts from before the eighth century, says the University of Tsukuba anthropologist Mark Hudson, "the problem is not evidence but interpretation."

Hudson compares the debate over the tombs and ethnic identity to one over the thesis, supported by DNA and skeletal evidence, that a wave of immigrants came to Japan from the continent twenty-four hundred years ago."Despite clear links with Korea in the early Yayoi, many Japanese archaeologists are still reluctant to talk about a major influx of actual people from the peninsula," Hudson remarks.

As Farris writes in his book on Japanese archaeology *Sacred Texts and Buried Treasures*, Japanese and Koreans—though "fond of seeing 'Japanese' or 'Korean' characteristics in ancient societies"—forget that neither "the Korean Peninsula nor the Japanese archipelago was unified for most of the period under consideration," the first seven centuries A.D. Indeed, east Asian ethnic identities interwove and overlapped throughout these periods—yet Japan's early heterogeneity is often omitted from national memory.

Could the unopened tombs contain a Rosetta stone that will at last reveal the truth about ancient Japanese and Korean history? Probably nothing so dramatic lies within the graves, but their closure continues to intrigue scholars of both nations. Sarah Nelson, an archaeologist of ancient Korea at the University of Denver, says, "We could perhaps learn more about the Paekche kingdom from the contents of those tombs," noting that the ancient Korean kingdom of Silla had few inscriptions and that "the Paekche tombs were mostly robbed."

Sadly, most scholars agree that the battle for access is exhausting and probably futile. Still, an archaeologist can dream. The tombs "would fill an immense black hole in Japanese history," concludes Farris. "They should be opened. They would undoubtedly be a scholarly bonanza."

Alissa Quart's work has appeared in *The New York Times*, the London *Independent*, and *Salon*. Her article "The Insider: David Bordwell Blows the Whistle on Film Studies" appeared in the March 2000 *LF*.

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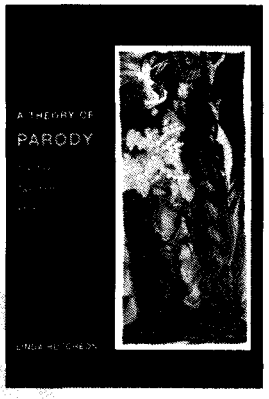

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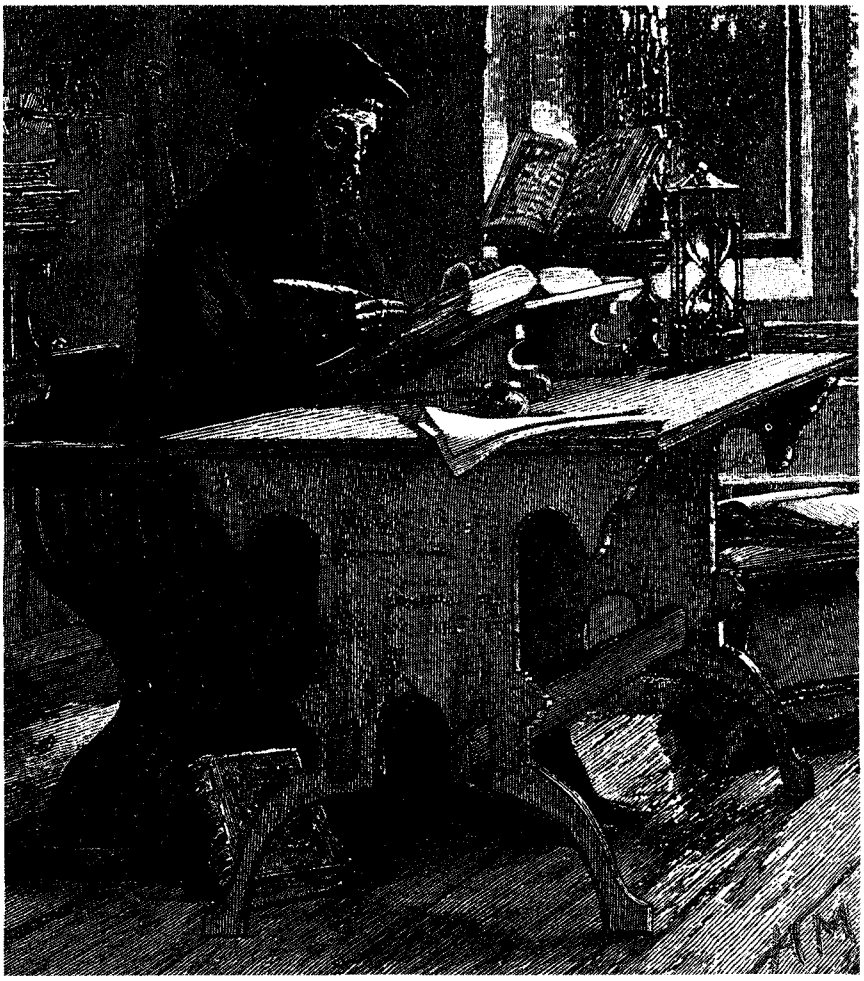

THE LEXICOGRAPHER'S APPRENTICE

BY **JESSE SHEIDLOWER**

IN AUGUST 1999, I WAS HIRED BY THE OXFORD English Dictionary to oversee its first-ever American office. I was thrilled by the opportunity—working for the OED had always been my dream job—and eager to get started. But before I could begin my editorial labors, I was asked to spend several months in England undergoing a crash course in the OED's complex work practices and arcane traditions. Herewith, a diary I kept of my first weeks as an American wordsmith in Oxford.

WEEK ONE

When I arrive, the OED staff has just returned after an office renovation, ensuring that I'm not the only one who has no idea where to go. I get shown around and introduced to the largest dictionary staff I've ever encountered, more than fifty people with responsibilities so specialized and refined that they could be working for NASA. With this many people I would think that nearly any project could be finished in a month, but then again, I've never before worked on a dictionary that's projected to be forty volumes, comes out once a century, and is considered the oracle of an entire language.

Although most OED lexicographers have backgrounds in linguistics and are up on their Old English, advanced academic expertise is not an absolute requirement. Of the five principal editors who supervise the bulk of the general editorial work, only three have Ph.D.'s, and those are in medieval Italian literature, modern Irish literature, and biochemistry.

While attempting to get my bearings, I run up against a wall of acronyms that would make any government agency proud. Some aren't too difficult, and I can quickly master NEWS for the new-word group (New English Words Series, officially), PE for principal editor, and VF for variant form. Then I learn that each of the fifty-plus editors is referred to by initials more often than by name, and though I can remember that I'm JTS and the chief editor is JAS, I lose track of who JAB, JAF, JAP, JES, and JFM are—and I'm not even halfway through the Js. I log on to the dictionary database and find that there are acronyms for each word, type of word, and place in the canon of words we are cataloging, with *d* meaning "source," *s4* meaning "main sense," and *crd* meaning, for some reason, "number in the new-word series." I hear about the bibliographic program, which QEMSs the text, QEMS being an acronym whose expansion no one seems to recall ("Simon knew that, didn't he? But he left two years ago"). I meet the FWEP group, responsible for Function Words (those words like "do" and "of" that are every lexicographer's nightmare), Etymology, and Pronunciation; the FWEP group consists of the hardest of the hard core, a cluster of Ph.D.'s who chat in the tea room about the development of diphthongs in the Kentish dialect of Middle English and have desks stacked high with

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books such as *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Part VII* and *Studies on the Use of the Preposition "Of" in Fifteenth-Century Correspondence.* I feel pathetic for having dropped out of grad school and glad that these experts are now just an e-mail away.

As my colleagues become more comfortable in my presence, the inevitable barrage of questions about Americans comes my way. "Do people really say 'gotten' over there?" (Yes.) "Is May Day celebrated widely?" (Only among Marxists.) "Is 'Master' ever used as a courtesy title for unmarried men?" (Not since we kicked your ass in the Revolution.) From the FWEP group: "In Mid-Atlantic American pronunciation, would all three post-tonic syllables of 'madrigalist' have schwa, or would one of them take a secondary stress?" (I'll get back to you on that.)

Still, my American attitude seems to add a bit of liveliness to the office, and it isn't entirely unwelcome. A senior editor assures me that no one in the history of the OED had ever said, "Yo, Nigel, that definition really *rocks.*"

WEEK TWO

What they have planned for me is a step-by-step introduction to every aspect of what is done to every word in the dictionary. I begin by learning the dreaded job of pre-editorial sorter. These poor souls sort through a two-foot-long box of index cards and computer printouts, comprising thousands of examples of words but representing perhaps only a single page in the finished dictionary. These cards, some of which are over a hundred years old, must each be evaluated and filed: Quotations or comments that might cause a definition to be rewritten or an entry restructured go to the Revision file; useful quotations that will almost certainly go into the dictionary get sent to the Editorial Set; quotations that duplicate information already in the dictionary go to In OED; one-off examples of words not likely to be entered go to NotIn; Etymology, Variant Forms, Pronunciation, Refiling, Pre-1800 NotIn, and others have smaller files of their own.

Oxford is in the process of publishing the first-ever revised version of the dictionary. The OED originally came out sequentially in dozens of small parts from 1884 to 1928. Although there were supplements published in 1933 and (in four volumes) 1972–86, and though a second edition was published in 1989, the original entries have remained largely untouched (which is why even in the second edition you can find, in the entry for the adverb "bloody," the comment, "now constantly in the mouths of the lowest classes, but by respectable people considered 'a horrid word'"). The new edition will represent a complete reevaluation and rewriting of every word in the dictionary.

As I do my work, I find that the handwriting is a frequent problem, with some cards nearly indecipherable. The neat and small handwriting of renowned chief editor James Murray is a relief, as is that of Dr. William Chester Minor, the "madman" to Murray's "professor" in Simon Winchester's book *The Professor and the Madman*; an occasional note from J.R.R. Tolkien, who worked on the OED for a few years, is a calligraphic pleasure, but founding editor F.J. Furnivall's unreadable scribbles make a Rorschach test look like an Ansel Adams photograph. Although tedious, the work is genuinely difficult, requiring careful thought and a real understanding of how the dictionary is assembled. Furthermore, the position of pre-editorial sorter is a powerful one: An interesting quotation can be assured special attention if placed in Revision, but a card placed in NotIn will probably never be looked at by someone more senior. Working on the word "artilleryman," intoxicated with this newfound sense of power, I take a sentence from a 1900 book called *Anthology of Curiosities of Medicine*—"An artilleryman was seized by the penis by an infuriated horse"—and stick it in the Revision file.

The sorted citations will next go to an assistant editor, who will research and draft rough entries; then an editor or associate editor (as they call what would be a "senior editor" in the United States) will review and rewrite everything, arriving at a finished entry that itself will only get torn apart by the principal editor who heads each team. I have been hired as a principal editor.

Before I left for my four-month trip to Oxford, friends in America asked, "You've been doing this for years at Random House—what could they possibly need to train you in that could take that long?" After I stumble my way through the pre-editorial sorting, my instructress gently asks, "How are they going to train you to be a principal editor in just four months?"

WEEK THREE

For its ancientness and tradition, Oxford's Bodleian is the most exciting library in the world. The official notice inviting me to apply for a reader's card includes the reminder "Please bring your gown and some identification with you." I am allowed to forgo the gown but am told that I must swear an oath. Though I worry that the oath will involve agreeing to check my sword at the door or to defend the books against the heathen French, it turns out only to be the promise that "I will neither bring in fire nor kindle it within." The Bod, as it's called by those of us in the know, has pretty much everything ever published in English (and most other languages). My Bod card gives me access to it all: Shakespeare first folios, medieval manuscripts, whatever I want to see. And as part of my training, I won't just be gaping at these treasures—I'll be using them.

THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY NEEDED AN AMERICAN EDITOR. I ANSWERED THE CALL.

I start on easy, fun stuff: Thomas Dekker comedies, the first printing of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novel *The Valley of Fear,* the original scripts to *Monty Python's Flying Circus.* Then the real work begins. Melinda, the head of the library team, drops by to explain the task. "We're checking Philemon Holland's 1601 translation of Pliny," she says. "FWEP needs you to check the English first edition, and then find and copy the source passage in the French text that Holland translated from, and then find and copy the source of the French text in the Latin original. It should take about three hours." She then hands me a stack of definition slips the size of an unbound man-

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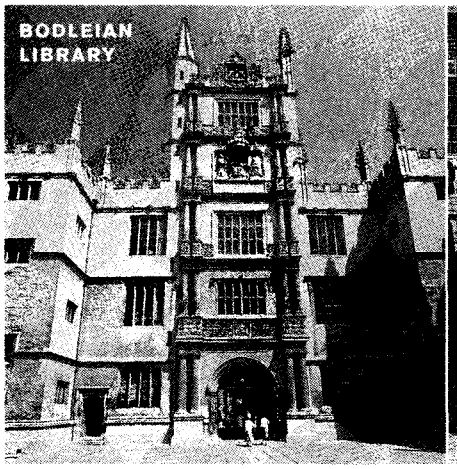

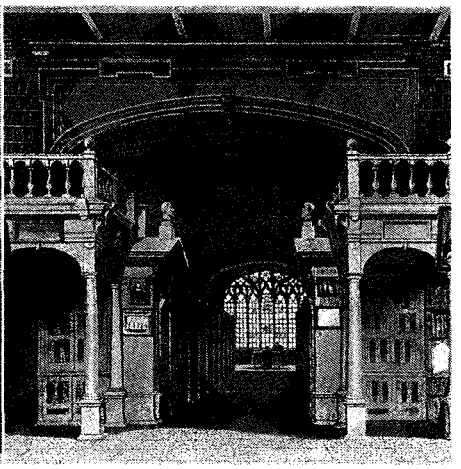

uscript of *War and Peace,* and bounds off before I can give her a better sense of my facility with Latin and Middle French.

WEEK FOUR

With a few weeks of OED experience under my belt, I am allowed to move on to a familiar task: new-words drafting. Because this occupied the bulk of my previous lexicographical career, it goes relatively smoothly, with the computer system the only real stumbling block. I dispatch a pile of American neologisms: "high-concept," "yadda-yadda-yadda" (I manage to push it four decades before *Seinfeld* came along), "punditocracy," "muskimoot" (some sort of woven basket made by Canadian Indians), "Manolo Blahniks" ("In *pl.* A proprietary name for: fashionable women's shoes designed by Manolo Blahnik"; Graeme, my new tutor, tells me, "Sometimes you draft words hoping they *don't* get in"). The OED name makes it easy to call people and get them to answer my questions, and the library research team helps mop up outstanding difficulties. I finally feel as if I'm contributing something, even if it's only the knowledge that Americans were using the word "scumbag" forty-five years earlier than the OED's best research had revealed.

POST-OED

Today, back in America, I work alone in an office while I plan to build up my editorial staff. Though much of my work involves new words, there's a lot more to my job than just defining "content provider." There's the management of the OED's reading program, which requires dozens of volunteers to go through such sources as the journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition and *The Wall Street Journal,* the collected letters of Jack Kerouac and the Marilyn Manson autobiography, the Senate testimony of Joseph Valachi against the Mafia and the latest issue of *Organic Gardening*—and, of course, *Lingua Franca,* citations from which are found in the OED's database for such words as "minimolared," "autoterpsichorean," "crypto-creationist," "omniglot," and many others.

Of course, I have to reply to buckets of letters, ranging from the extremely useful ("I just came across this example of so-and-so, which seems to be earlier than what's in the OED"), to the well intentioned but unhelpful ("It occurred to me while reading Henry James that he was very fond of the word 'lucidity,' so I've copied out thirty-nine examples of it from his books"), to the incredibly annoying ("I have coined a number of useful words, which I'll be happy to sell you for only $25 each"). The last are distressingly common, as are angry letters complaining about the inclusion of vulgar or racially offensive words; all require individual responses.

I also have to deal with the media constantly, which is good or bad, depending on whether the question is, say, "Can you tell me about the development of the word 'gravitas'?" or "What is *your* favorite word?"

I learned a good deal in Oxford, but not how to answer that last one.

Jesse Sheidlower is the principal editor of the North American Editorial Unit of the Oxford English Dictionary. He is the author of *Jesse's Word of the Day* and the editor of *The F-Word,* both published by Random House, and his writing has appeared in *Esquire, Harper's,* and *The Atlantic Monthly.*

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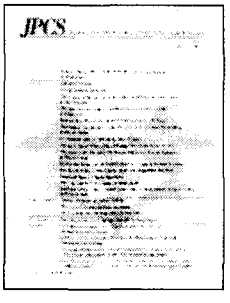

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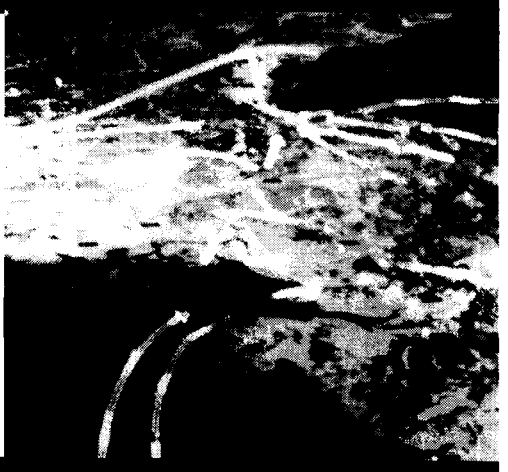

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The Eugenio Battisti Award is given each year for the best article in Utopian Studies. A list of the awards can be found in Utopian Studies 10.2 (1999): 462.

In addition the Society publishes a newsletter, *Utopus Discovered*, which contains information about upcoming conferences and workshops, and a bibliography of recent publications in the field.

Each year the Society holds an annual conference, and the twenty-sixth annual meeting of the Society for Utopian Studies will be held in Buffalo, NY, October 4-7, 2001. The Society for Utopian Studies home page can be found at www.utoronto.ca/utopia

For information regarding any of the Society's activities, contact Professor Naomi Jacobs, English Department, University of Maine, 04469-0122, USA. T: (207) 581-3818. F: (207) 581-3886. Naomi_jacobs@umit.maine.edu

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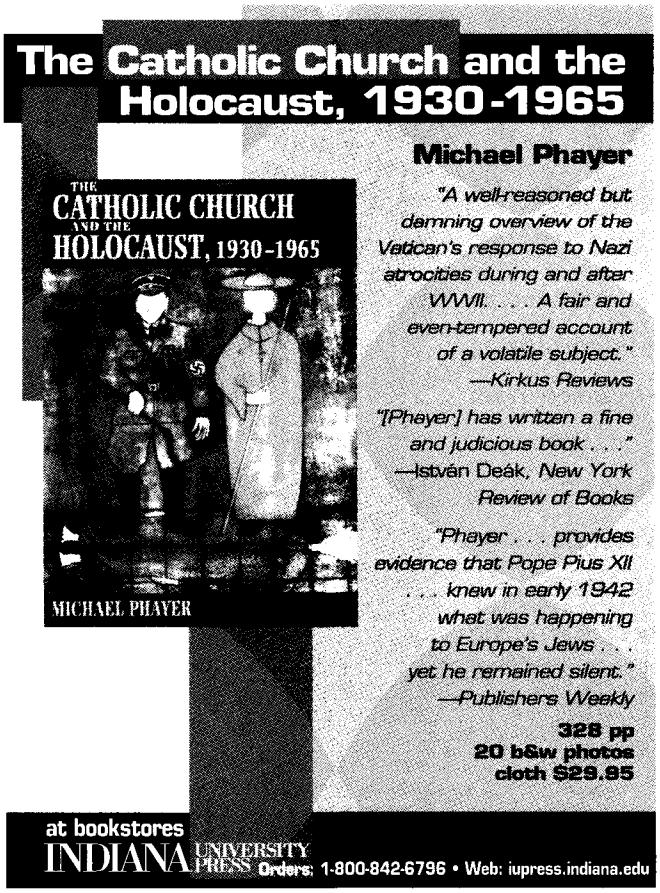
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CONFERENCES

THE SECOND NUCLEAR AGE AND THE ACADEMY

announcing "The Second Nuclear Age and the Academy," to be held by the Center on Violence and Human Survival at the CUNY Graduate Center, Fifth Avenue at 34th Street. Co-Sponsored by the Graduate Center, CUNY, and The Nation Institute, the goal of this conference is to break through the psychic numbing regarding nuclear threat that grips America and to energize the general public, as well as policymakers, to find creative solutions to American and international security. We seek to reach out to the academy as a means of changing civil society and sparking a new student movement. Participants include authorities on issues of nuclear weapons, such as Robert Jay Lifton, Jonathan Schell, Randall Forsberg, Rolf Ekeus, Richard Falk, Frances Fitzgerald, and Theodore Postol. These participants will engage in a dialogue with scholars from other fields interested in political, social, ethical, and legal issues, such as Peter Singer, David Tracy, and others. In workshops, activists and younger faculty will discuss the issues of the conference and look toward social change. Contact Charles B. Strozier, T: (212) 237-8432.

New York, NY: November 17–18, 2000

BACK TO BARTHES

Yale University announces "Back to Barthes," a symposium that aims to recuperate the many faces and voices of Roland Barthes, and to reassess his lessons for literary and cultural criticism today—including the possible place of theory at a post-theory moment. Participants: Raymond Bellour, Geoffrey Bennington, Yve-Alain Bois, Malcolm Bowie, Antoine Compagnon, Michel Deguy, Françoise Gaillard, Richard Howard, Martin Jay, Diana Knight, Lawrence Kritzman, D.A. Miller, Leyla Perrone-Moïses, Dana Polan, Michael Riffaterre, Philippe Roger, Pierre Saint-Amand, and Susan Sontag. Organizers: Peter Brooks, Marthe Reed, and Naomi Schor. All sessions are free and open to the public. Whitney Humanities Center, 53 Wall St., New Haven, CT 06520. For more information, T: (203) 432-0777; E-mail: <manana.sikic@yale.edu>.

New Haven, CT: December 8–9, 2000

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS

The Organization of American Historians announces its 94th Annual Meeting to be held April 26–29, 2001 at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles, California. The meeting's location in the cultural mosaic of Los Angeles and OAH's efforts to reach a wider public helped shape our theme, "Connections: Rethinking Our Audiences." Over 180 sessions, panels, workshops, and round-table conversations offer the best scholarship in American history and culture. Featured speakers include NEH chair William Ferris, documentary filmmaker Ric Burns, and political commentators Arianna Huffington and Susan Estrich. The world's largest professional association of American history educators and researchers, OAH publishes the *Journal of American History*. Web: www.oah.org; E-mail: <oah@oah.org>; T: (812) 855-7311.

Los Angeles, CA: April 26–29, 2001

GLOBALIZING THE STREETS

John Jay College of Criminal Justice announces the Second Biennial Conference on Street Youth, Social Control and Empowerment. The Street Organization Project is organizing a major international and interdisciplinary conference entitled "Globalizing the Streets: Youth, Social Control and Empowerment in the New Millennium." For further details on proposal submissions and registration, contact Juan Esteva, Department of Sociology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 899 10th Avenue, Suite 520, New York, NY 10019; T: (212) 237-8201; F: (212) 237-8940; E-mail: <Streetresearch@aol.com>; Web: www.members.aol.com/streetresearchDeadline for abstracts: January 1, 2000.

New York, NY: May 2–5, 2001

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WAR OF THE WORLDS

DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD? OR IN MULTIPLE UNIVERSES?

DO WE LIVE IN A "DESIGNER universe"? This question has been batted around since the 1960s, when cosmologists began to notice that the laws of nature seemed fine-tuned for conscious life to emerge. If the fundamental constants of physics—the strength of gravity, the ratio of the mass of the proton to that of the neutron, the energy density of empty space, and so on—had differed by a hair from their actual values, the universe would have been a lifeless dud: no stars, no stable elements, no evolution. It is as if a cosmic designer had twiddled a bunch of control knobs until they were at precisely the right settings to ensure that beings like us would eventually shimmer onto the scene.

The Cosmic Designer Hypothesis is one way of explaining the improbable fine-tuning of nature's laws. And compared with the Big Fluke Hypothesis (which is really no explanation at all), it may not look so bad. But those who find its deistic flavor unpalatable have suggested a third option: the Many Universes Hypothesis. This hypothesis, which has been around for a couple of decades, has been elegantly spelled out by the physicist Steven Weinberg in his essay "A Designer Universe?," published last year in *The New York Review of Books* and recently anthologized in *The Best American Essays 2000.*

The argument goes like this. Suppose our universe is but one among a vast ensemble of universes that all somehow coexist. Suppose further that the fundamental constants vary randomly across these universes. Then we could expect that at least one universe out of the ensemble should be hospitable to intelligent life. Add to this the truism that we can only observe a universe that is consistent with our existence—the so-called anthropic principle—and the apparent fine-tuning of our universe suddenly seems wholly unremarkable.

At first blush, the Many Universes Hypothesis would appear rather extravagant, requiring a huge (perhaps infinite) number of additional universes merely to account for some features of our own. The Cosmic Designer Hypothesis looks downright economical by comparison. Since these extra universes are cut off from our own in space and time, and are thus unobservable, they would seem to offend against the principle that our theories of the world should posit no more entities than needed. Shouldn't these universes be shaved away by Occam's razor?

Well, that depends on what grounds we have for believing they exist. In an excellent article in the June 2000 issue of the journal *Noûs,* Roger White points out that some philosophers, notably Derek Parfit and John Leslie, think that our universe's otherwise improbable fine-tuning could be grounds enough. Their case turns on an uncontroversial principle of probabilistic reasoning: If the truth of a certain hypothesis (Many Universes) would render a certain observation (fine-tuning) more likely, then making that observation increases the likelihood of that hypothesis.

But one must be careful here. It is true that the existence of many universes would make it likely that at least one of them would be life fostering. The hypothesis would not, however, have any bearing on the probability that *this particular universe* would be life fostering. Consider the analogy of rolling a pair of dice. If you roll them just once, the chance of getting double sixes is only one in thirty-six. If you roll them twenty-five times, the chance of getting double sixes on at least one of the rolls rises above fifty-fifty. Yet the total number of rolls has no effect on the odds of getting double sixes on any particular roll.

Some people think that if you roll the dice repeatedly and don't get double sixes, then you are more likely to get double sixes on the next roll. They are victims of the notorious gambler's fallacy. In a 1987 article in *Mind*, the philosopher Ian Hacking sees a kindred bit of illogic behind the Many Universes Hypothesis. Suppose you enter a room and see a guy roll a pair of dice. They come up double sixes. You think, "Aha, that is very unlikely on a single roll, so he must have rolled the dice many times before I walked into the room." You have committed what Hacking labels the inverse gambler's fallacy. Doesn't one make a similar mistake when one argues that because we live in an improbably congenial universe there must also be a great number of uncongenial ones out there?

Proponents of the Many Universes Hypothesis have vigorously denied that any such fallacy taints their reasoning. Interesting as it is, the resulting debate needn't concern Weinberg. His case is different from that of the philosophers. The philosophers argue that the fact that our universe appears to be fine-tuned supports the hypothesis of multiple universes. Weinberg, by contrast, supplies independent grounds for believing in multiple universes. There are several physical theories, he points out, that seem to imply their existence—for instance, Andrei Linde's "chaotic inflation" model, in which cosmos-engendering big bangs are fairly routine.

So if the Multiple Universes Hypothesis is true (as Weinberg qua physicist suspects), there would seem to be no explanatory need for the Cosmic Designer Hypothesis (as Weinberg qua unbeliever desires). It remains possible, of course, that they are *both* true: that there are many different universes, and that a cosmic designer painstakingly tailored one of them for us. But now it is the hypothesis of a cosmic designer that stands in need of independent grounds to be believed. Evidence of design is no longer enough.

JIM HOLT

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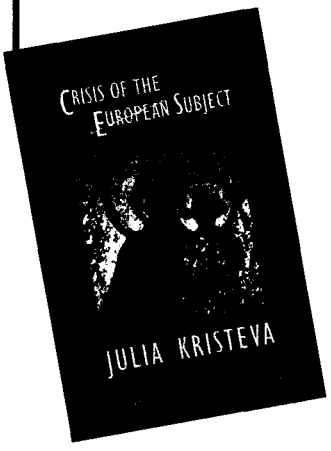

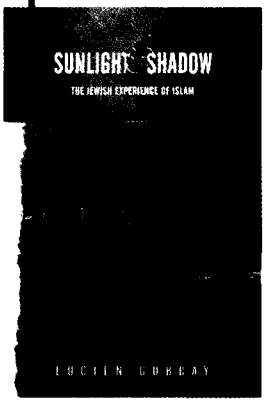

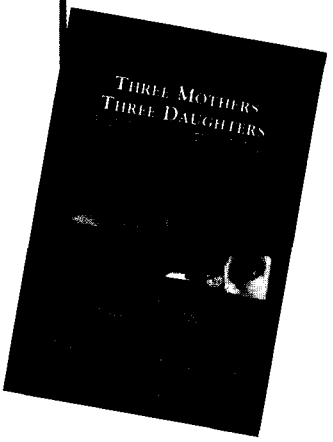

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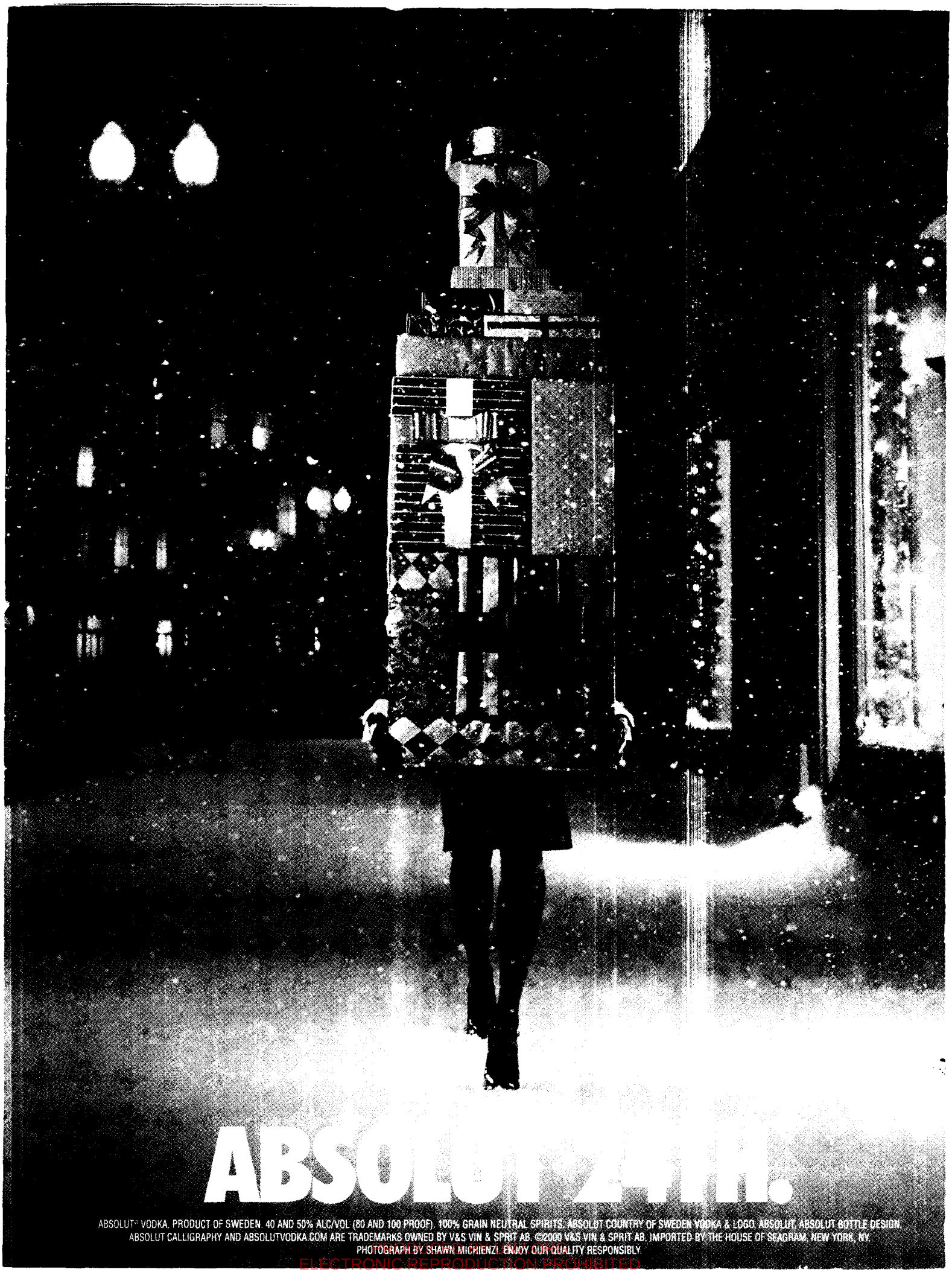

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